

METAL GEAR SOLID 4 8-PAGES OF
SCREENS & INFO!

100% INDEPENDENT PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE

PSP

DECEMBER 2005, ISSUE 104

**WORLD'S
NO. 1
PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE**

REVIEW + SECRETS + Q&A
**RESIDENT
EVIL 4**
**A PERFECT 10! "THE BEST
RESIDENT EVIL EVER!"** pg 22

**PRINCE OF
PERSIA**

PSP FIRST LOOK!

PS3:
GRAN TURISMO 5
WARHAWK
DEVIL MAY CRY 4



**NEW PSP
HACKS**



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☐ **brains**

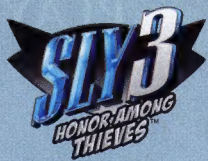
☐ **stealth**



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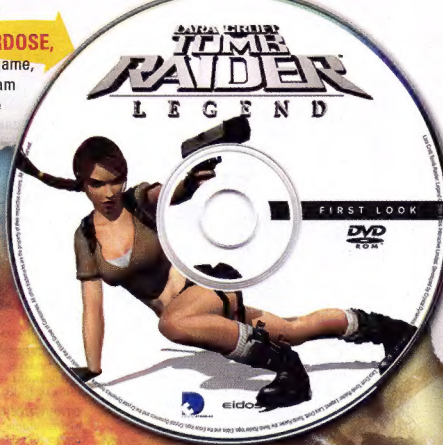


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FAVORITE GAMES
Platforms, action-adventure, arcade racing
SUCKER FOR Goofy games, NES-era nostalgia, cool character designs
OTHER INTERESTS Comics, anime, action films, hoops, drawing, fast food, *One Piece*



FAVORITE GAMES
Platforms, first-person shooters, racers
SUCKER FOR Retro remakes, classics compilations, and anything by Hideo Kojima.
OTHER INTERESTS Manga, anime, action figures, my cats, Karl!



FAVORITE GAMES
Blazing Lasers, *Zork*, *Legend of Dragoon*
SUCKER FOR Mrs. Bratcher, pigs, muppets, my soon-to-be new guitar.
OTHER INTERESTS The Applesed movie, landscaping my yard.



FAVORITE GAMES
Jump Superstars, *MGS*
SUCKER FOR Apparently, Gameboys of all sizes, colors, and screen brightness... and eyes.
OTHER INTERESTS Nostalgia, kitty cats, puppy dogs, macro life.



"I know what the best game will be for PS3: *Metal Gear Solid 4*. Y'know what the best PS2 game will be this fall? *Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence*. Know what I want the most for my PSP? *Metal Gear ACID 2*. Know what I want to play the most online? *Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence*, again. Hey, if this is turning into an unhealthy addiction, then buddy, I don't ever want an intervention!"

"I don't think I can stand the wait. It could be two more years before I actually get to play the final version of *Metal Gear Solid 4*. No... there must be some way to play it sooner. I know: I'll build a time machine. Unfortunately, all I have at my desk is some jumper cables and a carboard box. But I bet if I hook them both up to the power lines outside my window, I'll make it. Oh yeah. Snake, here I come... YOWH!!"

"I need make a few corrections from last issue. First, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* is actually rated E 10+ and costs only \$39.99, so our bad there. More importantly, it turns out that my new favorite thing at Taco Bell is actually the Cheesy Gordita Crunch - not the Crunch Wrap Supreme, as I stated last issue. My apologies to all who had to choke down a Crunch Wrap Supreme because of my mistake."

"The Tokyo Game Show felt very restrained this year. My feeling was that Sony didn't want to rush anything for three reasons: one, it's never a good thing to things prematurely; two, there's still plenty of life in the PS2... and PSP!; three, they simply didn't have to. I mean, I'm all for Xbox 360 but it's only a couple of months before launch, and Microsoft had nothing to wow over. High-res, yes. Wow, no."

KOJIMA, SHOW US THE WAY

We should've learned our lesson by now: a new generation of gaming doesn't start until Hideo Kojima says so. Just as *Metal Gear Solid* and *MGS2* showed all of us what PSone and PS2 were capable of, Kojima's *MGS4* trailer has set the bar for PS3. Have you seen this beast? We've got your best look at the game anywhere on page 22, with tons more coverage to come. You'd better believe we're on top of this one!

CHRIS SLATE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
<http://chrisslate.blogspot.com>

GET IN THE MAG WITH PSM ONLINE!

PSM is more than what you're holding in your hands. It also has a companion web site, psmonline.com, that's your gateway to the polls, contests, and interaction with the PSM staff, game makers, and other PSM readers that appear in our pages every month. If you don't check it out, you're missing out!

OUR MISSION

PSM IS devoted to giving our readers what they deserve: the absolute best coverage anywhere of everything that matters to PlayStation gamers, because we love it just as much as you do.

WE WILL give the games that matter to you, the hardcore gamer, the in-depth coverage they demand. We will only review games when they're ready, after we've beaten them; we'll pull no punches with our verdicts and stand behind them 100%. We will dig deeper behind the big stories, and never settle for "just okay" with anything we do. When we make a

promise, we'll keep it. When we make a mistake, we'll admit it. We will surprise you and always strive to give you more.

WE WON'T waste your time with movie or music reviews. We won't waste space interviewing celebrities who know jack about games, in some lame attempt to look cool. You know what? Games are cool. We don't care about being kid-tested and mother-approved, and we'll never hesitate to call B.S. when necessary.

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破壊に向から



鮮血大山斬り



血の橋を渡る



首斬り盆栽



PSM CONTENTS

++ DECEMBER 2005 ++ ISSUE 104 ++

Resident Evil 4!!!

The Dead walk among us... or do they? Can you solve the mystery or will you end up as zombie fodder? The screaming starts on page 70!

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PSP Hacks

Talented amateurs are putting the PSP through its paces... and Sony doesn't like it! Find out why on page 61.



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Five Ways the PS3 Will Change Games

The PS3's processing power will change a lot more than just the graphics. You can get the scoop on page 66.

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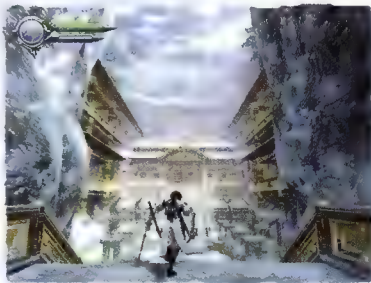
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I've been out of Baker's shadow for no more than three days now and already I'm feeling the weight of my fear. The fear that around every corner somebody's lying in wait. The fear that any wrong choice could end up killing what I'm trying to save. Well, somebody's got to lead this fight. And if I call this right, my men — the men who have fought next to me — will get out of this hell alive.

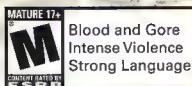
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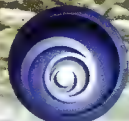
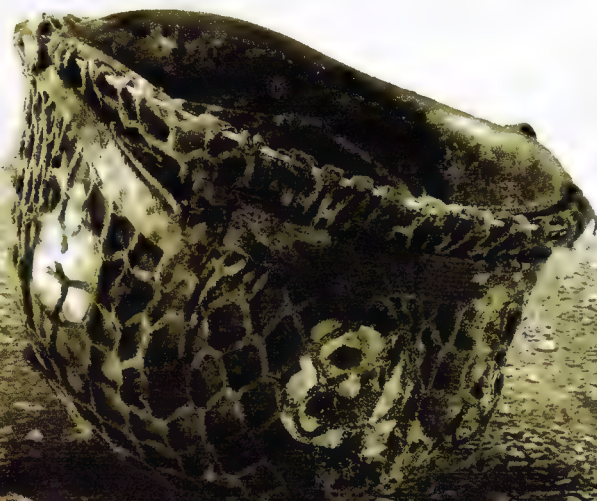


PlayStation.2



TAKING COMMAND ISN'T EASY.

TAKING THE CONSEQUENCES IS EVEN HARDER.



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software

UBISOFT

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ATARI

**TOKYO
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SPECIAL!**

PSM heads to Japan for an updated look at PS3's stunning games, but no hands-on with the system



Vision Gran Turismo, the tech demo that could become Gran Turismo 5, was no longer using any art or models from Gran Turismo 4. It was all PS3!

PLAYSTATION 3: THE NEXT GENERATION BEGINS HERE

Japan might not be completely back on the map as the preeminent game-making country (many Japanese companies are still trying to get a handle on what will sell in the GTA-entranced West), but no one can say that this year's Tokyo Game Show wasn't one of the best ever. In some ways, it eclipsed even our own E3 2005. All the major players were there—including Nintendo, who didn't exhibit, but whose president gave a keynote speech to unveil their next console's controller—but it was Sony, despite the lack of actual playable PS3 hardware, that really stole the show.

PlayStation: still the clear leader
It couldn't have been any clearer that third party developers still see Sony's hardware as the system of choice. Heck, there was even a number of great PSP games (see

sidebar). Mostly, though, it was the overwhelming commitment to releasing PS3 games—not just one or two, but multiple—from Japan's top publisher right down to the small creative studios that had us floored. Just one look at the complete list so far should have you doing the happy dance, too.

Oh, and then there was a little game called... *Metal Gear Solid 4*. Okay, so maybe it's not quite so little. In fact, Konami and Sony could have just shown the real time, in-game trailer every 10 minutes and called it a show. The thousands in attendance (PSM included) would have gladly paid the price of admission for it alone. Don't worry—you can read every little detail about it in our seven Snake-filled pages of *MGS4* coverage starting on page 22.

The main message of this TGS was clear: the next generation of games is almost

here. While there were some noteworthy PS2 games announced and on display, the focus was clearly on drumming up excitement for PS3. So while there unfortunately weren't any PS3 controllers—redesigned or not—to get our mitts on, or any date or price details divulged, there was certainly plenty of excitement in the air... and surging out of Sony's booth.

In addition to our massive first look at *MGS4* in action, we've put together a guide to all the best PS2 and PSP games we saw. Not to mention the latest, greatest screens of upcoming PS3 blockbusters. Not all of the games we saw (no matter how cool they might have been) will hit the U.S., but we're putting some numbers on their chances of coming over.

After this TGS, there can be no doubt: Next year's E3 is going to be the end-all, be-all videogame event of *all time*.

TGS PS3 Showcase

Sony's TGS booth was a major draw at the show, displaying trailers for upcoming PS3 games (some from E3, some new) on a giant high-definition screen. PS3 developers were unusually silent about their PS3 games, having nothing playable and only released one or two new screenshots at most. But what remarkable ones they were!



Devil May Cry 4



Project Assassin



Lair



WarDevil



Armored Core 4



Genji 2



Fatal Inertia



Warhawk

PlayStation 3: The Games For Japan

ACQUIRE

New historical action game

ARC SYSTEM WORKS

Next-generation fighting game tool

ArtDink

Bipedal Movement
Simulation
Inner Mind adventure

ASTROLL

Seikan

ATARI

Alone in the Dark sequel
Driver 5
Stuntman

ATHENA

Pro Mahjong Final

ATLUS

Shin Megami Tensei series

BANDAI

Anime related project
Mobile Suit Gundam
Untitled robot action game

BANPRESTO

Super Robot series

CAPCOM

Devil May Cry 4
Resident Evil 5
Untitled action game

CAVIA

Untitled action RPG

CYBERFRONT

Growth simulation
Management simulation
Puzzle action

SUCCESS

Hitsugi Mura
RPG

D3 PUBLISHER

Dark Sector
Fighting action game

DATAM POLYSTAR

Untitled adventure game

DIGITAL GAIN

Nekot Plan

DORASU

Slotter Mania

EIDOS

Untitled action game

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Fight Night Round 3

ENTERBRAIN

Dorby Station

ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE PUBLISHING

Entain
Untitled action game

FROM SOFTWARE

Armored Core 4
Black Blade
Dark RPG

GENKI

Racing game
Sword fighting game

GLOBAL A.

ENTERTAINMENT

Comical history action

Good Navigate

Mystery adventure game

GUST

Untitled role playing game

HACKBERRY

Pachinko Jikki

HAMSTER

Management simulation

HUDSON

Bombberman
Rengoku: The End of the Century
Untitled RPG

IDEA FACTORY

Shin Ten Makai VI

INTERCHANNEL

Untitled love adventure game

IREM SOFTWARE ENGINEERING

Action-adventure game

KOEI

Blade Storm: Hundred Years War
Fatal Inertia
Mahjong Taikai
Ni-On

KONAMI

Gradius
Jikkou Powerful Pro Baseball
Metal Gear Solid 4: The Patriots
Untitled action game
Untitled role playing game
Winning Eleven

KOTO

Active Dogs

MAGNOLIA

Saikyou Ginsel Igo 7
Saikyou Ginsel Shougi 7
Value 2000 Igo
Value 2000 Shougi

MAINICHI

COMMUNICATIONS
Shougi World Champion
Gekisashi

MARIONETTE

War simulation game

MARVELOUS INTERACTIVE

Untitled action game

MEDIAWORKS

Untitled adventure game

MICHAEL.SOFT

Project D

NEMCO

Untitled RPG
Untitled fighting game
Untitled shooting game
Untitled sports game

NIPPON-ICHI SOFTWARE

Makai Wars

NOW PRODUCTION

Untitled action game

ONGAKUKAN

Train Simulator Online

SNK PLAYMORE

King of Fighters:
Maximum Impact 3

SEGA

Fifth Phantom Saga
Sonic the Hedgehog

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

Angel Rings
The Eye of Judgment
Gran Turismo 5
Genji 2
Minna no Golf 5
Monster Carnival

SPRUE

Way of the Samurai 3

SQUARE ENIX

Final Fantasy

SUN DENSHI

Untitled simulation game

SUNRISE INTERACTIVE

Shinseiki GPX Cyber
Formula
Sunrise Eiyuutan

TAITO

Extreme
Project Psychic

TAKUYO KYOUGYOU

AKARI Project
MASTER Project

TECMO

Action game
Action-adventure game

UBISOFT

Assassin (U.S. title:
Killing Day)
Brothers in Arms 3

WARASHI

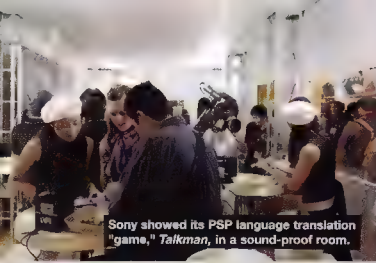
Marjong Oh

YAMASA ENTERTAINMENT

Yamasa Digi World DX

YUKE'S

Pro wrestling game



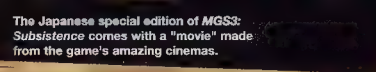
Sony showed its PSP language translation "game," *Talkman*, in a sound-proof room.



Konami had *Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence* set up for online play, and it rocked!



Square Enix's booth was small but sweet, showcasing *Kingdom Hearts II*.



The Japanese special edition of *MGS3: Subsistence* comes with a "movie" made from the game's amazing cinematics.



The future as presented by Microsoft: Stylish but empty. Sony really stole the show.

BEST OF TGS: PS2

This year's TGS was supposed to be the coming out party for the next generation — but that doesn't mean the PS2 and the PSP weren't flexing some muscle of their own. Here are the games that highlighted the current generation and portable arenas at the show.



Okami

Published by: Capcom
Made by: Clover Studio

Why we loved it: Easily our favorite PS2 game of the show, *Okami* has all the makings of an instant classic: Addictive and original gameplay, awe-inspiring visuals, and a playable dog character (damn you, *Nintendogs*!). Seriously, this game can make you forget about the next generation (for a bit, anyways...).

Chances of U.S. release: Seeing as how the game's already been announced for the U.S., we're gonna say 100%.

Devil May Cry 3: Special Edition

Published by: Capcom
Made by: Capcom

Why we loved it: Another Capcom game got us all hot and bothered: *Devil May Cry 3: Special Edition*. What makes this game so special? Besides including a Demo Digest mode, an International mode, and a Very Hard mode (are they crazy?), you can play through the whole game from Vergil's point of view. We are the lover of it.

Chances of U.S. release: We can't think of many reasons to not bring the game over, so we're looking at a good 90% chance.



Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence

Published by: Konami
Made by: Kojima Productions

Why we loved it: We had a chance to play the game's multiplayer mode, and by gosh, it's really, really good! Full of surprises and surprisingly full of gameplay, even we weren't ready for what Kojima and Co. had planned. Forget that our 2004 Game of the Year is included in the package, it's all about online, baby!

Chances of U.S. release: Again, another instance of an already confirmed U.S. game. 100%.

Ryu Ga Gotoku

Published by: Sega
Made by: Amusement Vision

Why we loved it: Love or hate *Shenmue*, you've got to respect it. So imagine how excited we were when we checked out *Ryu Ga Gotoku*, a very *Shenmue*-like game, with a very *Shenmue*-like budget (20 million!), only this one's made by the *Super Monkey Ball* team. Fighting, dating, amazing world, this game's got it all.

Chances of U.S. release: This one's a little iffy since *Shenmue* was never big here. Still, with the amount of time and money already

spent on the game, a U.S. release seems more likely than not. We'll give it, oh, a 70% chance.



Rogue Galaxy

Published by: Sony Computer Entertainment
Made by: Level 5

Why we loved it: The masters of cel-shaded RPGs, Level-5, wowed us again with *Rogue Galaxy*. Even without the stunning visuals, the action-orientated battles and open world were enough to give us a feeling for the magic underneath. This game could be huge, folks.

Chances of U.S. release: Since *Dark Cloud 1* and *2* both made it here, and *Dragon Quest VIII* is on its way (all three made by Level 5), there's a really good chance *Rogue Galaxy* will, too. 85%.

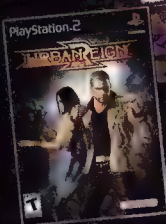
WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD.



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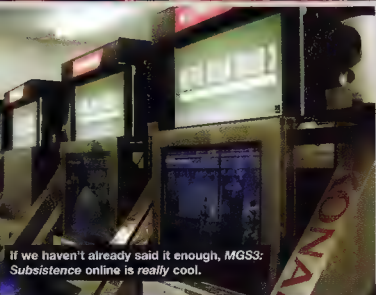
PlayStation 2

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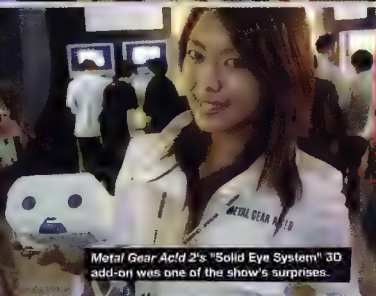
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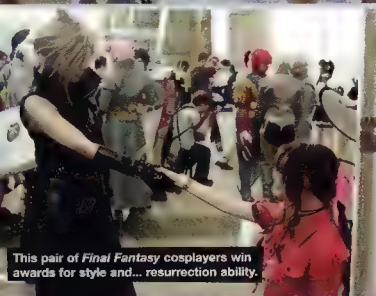
This fall on NBC: *Three Dante's and a Lady*.



If we haven't already said it enough, *MGSS3: Subsistence* online is really cool.



Metal Gear Solid 2's "Solid Eye System" 3D add-on was one of the show's surprises.



This pair of *Final Fantasy* cosplayers win awards for style and... resurrection ability.

We'd hoped to "experience" PS3 hands-on at the show, but this is as close as we got.



BEST OF TGS: PSP

Loco Roco

Published by: Sony CE
Made by: Sony CEJ

Why we loved it: It's totally fresh.

Chances of U.S. release: Hey, if *Katamari* can make it here, so can *Loco Roco*. And with all the positive press it's been getting, Sony would be crazy to not bring it over. 85%



Talkman

Published by: SCE
Made by: SCEJ

Why we loved it: First off, *Talkman* is not a game — it's a language translator between English, Korean, Chinese, and Japanese. Secondly, it comes with a USB microphone. This is the first real novel use for the PSP outside of multimedia functions and also for the USB port on top, and while not perfect, we found it quite a useful application. Hey, how do you say preorder in Korean again?

Chances of U.S. release: This type of application is much more popular in Asia, but Sony could do well by showing people that the PSP can do other things than play outrageously priced movies and ports of PS2 games. 65%

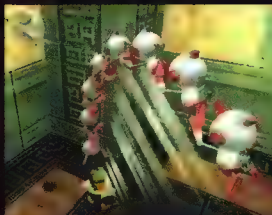


Go! Go! Makiyama

Published by: Capcom
Made by: Capcom

Why we loved it: Otherwise known as *Extreme Ghosts 'N' Ghosts*, this update to the classic Capcom franchise was pretty killer. You've got the same 2D gameplay, the same Arthur in his underwear, and the same level of insane difficulty. Interestingly enough, the game uses 3D character models which allow for some really cool graphical effects. Nostalgia, you win again!

Chances of U.S. release: This series has a huge following in the US, and even the *Maxima* offshoot games have done well. 90%

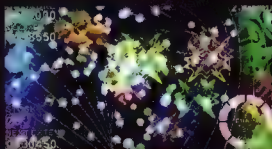


Tokobot

Published by: Tecmo
Made by: Tecmo

Why we loved it: Cute, cuddly, and by the creator of *Fatal Frame* (!), this third-person action-adventure game features unique gameplay through the use of little robots. Something along the lines of a first-party *Jak* or *Ratchet* game, there's little not to like about this surprise title. It's almost got that Nintendo charm to it.

Chances of U.S. release: It's announced and coming for the U.S. 100%



Every Extend Extra

Published by: Bandai
Made by: Q Entertainment

Why we loved it: The people that brought you *Lumines* now have another musical game coming, this time in the form of a shooter. It's hard to explain everything about the game, and the bizarre screen-shot probably isn't helping, but essentially you are trying to make big chain reactions happen using your limited ammunition to shoot things. Oh, and there are flying pigs. Could be very addictive...

Chances of U.S. release: *Lumines* is huge here, why shouldn't this game be? 90%

Method Man





**WHO DO YOU FIGHT
WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE FIGHTING FOR?**



PlayStation 2



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THE CHOICE IS YOURS.

Meet Shadow, a hedgehog with a mysterious past. Your choices throughout the game will enable him to discover who his enemies really are. With a little help from some high-speed vehicles and high-powered weapons, of course. Shadow's either going to destroy the world, or save us all. But either way, you'll have a blast.



A close-up, high-contrast image of Snake from Metal Gear Solid 4. He is wearing his signature blue bandana and tactical gear, holding a yellow M1911-style handgun. The background is dark and industrial.

**OMFG MGS4
THESE ARE REAL
PS3 SCREENS!**

SNAKE gets ready to round a corner, potentially putting him face-to-face with an enemy in a real time scene that looks as good, if not better than actual CG movies.

Nothing could have prepared us for what we were about to see when we showed up for Kojima Production's "Metal Gear Saga" presentation which kicked off TGS 2005.

We knew going in that Kojima was going to unveil the first trailer for *Metal Gear Solid 4* running on actual PlayStation 3 hardware. We didn't know that, just like he did several years

earlier with the first MGS2 trailer, he'd be showing us the most amazing videogame we've ever seen. That, and the true power of PS3. Not only to make better looking games, but games that feel 100% totally alive.

The setting

As first reported in issue 103 of PSM, *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots* (its official title) takes place in a constantly

changing warzone, with the TGS trailer taking place in an utterly decimated urban environment that looked like something straight out of *Black Hawk Down*.

From the very first frame, we were floored. The camera followed a squad of soldiers through the streets as the sun beat down on them and the wind blew sand and pieces of debris through the air. "FPS"

appeared on the screen — could Kojima be serious? The camera viewpoint certainly seemed to confirm it. We were seeing the war-ravage city through the sights of a rifle. But no, "FPS" became "Forget Pre-Rendered Stuff!," a clever stab at most of the PS3 footage from E3 and those who thought PS3 wasn't capable of such amazingly lush visuals. This was the real deal.

METAL GEAR SOLID 4

SHOCK

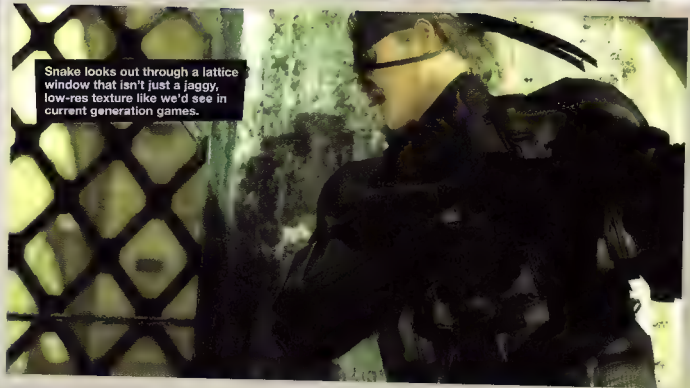
& AWE

Kojima drops the bomb: *MGS4* running on real PS3 hardware – and it's the best game we've ever seen!

Enter the Snake

Any and all fears that *MGS* was going the FPS route were smashed as the soldier we'd been seeing through the eyes of was quickly taken down and disarmed by Solid Snake. Yes: disarmed. Kojima hasn't said whether this will be an actual gameplay element in *MGS4* (taking weapons from enemies, something we've longed for) but he's also known to not

Solid Snake looks out through a lattice window that isn't just a jaggy, low-res texture like we'd see in current generation games.



"YES, WE SAID METAL GEARS. PLURAL"

include anything in his trailers you can't actually do in the finished game.

So, Snake is back. But there's something different about him. Not just the fancy new sneaking suit, either. No, he's *aged*. Being the direct sequel to MGS2, where Snake was in his late thirties, *MGS4* sees him looking like he's in his sixties and worse for the wear. In fact, the text "an old man tired of battle" appears during the trailer. This older Snake draws a knife, brandishing both it and his "procured" rifle CQC-style, and sneaks into a building, which is promptly blown to near rubble by a passing VTOL aircraft. Nowhere to hide indeed.

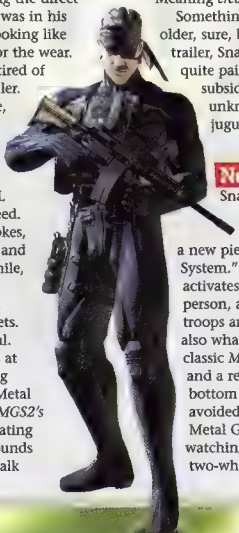
Out of ammo, but not smokes, a visibly tired Snake crouches and assesses his situation. Meanwhile, troops, armored personnel carriers, tanks, and new Metal Gears march through the streets. Yes, we said *Metal Gears*. Plural. Smaller than past Metal Gears at roughly 9ft tall and combining the upper portion of *MGS1*'s Metal Gear Rex with legs similar to *MGS2*'s Metal Gear Ray, these intimidating mechanical beasts emit the sounds of cicadas and cows as they walk

in an eerily human fashion down the street. Kojima has revealed a bit of background behind these creations. Their legs look the way they do because they're partially organic. Meaning living. Meaning *creepy*.

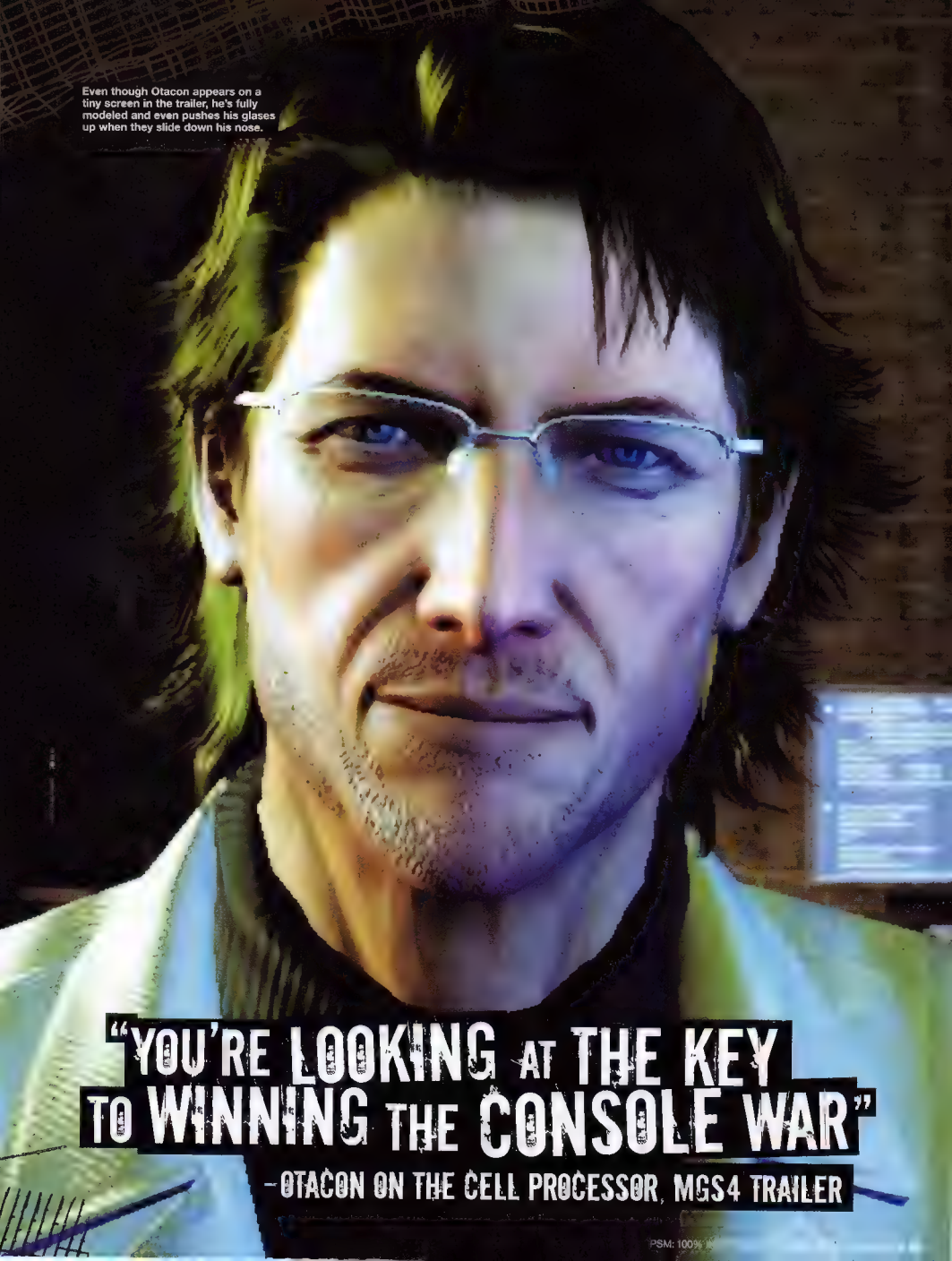
Something's up with Snake. He looks much older, sure, but there's more. He's sick. In the trailer, Snake has a sudden (and seemingly quite painful) coughing fit, which only subsides after he injects himself with an unknown substance straight into his jugular vein.

New tech, old ally

Sneak seems to be wearing an eye patch (those clones of Big Boss can't get enough of 'em) but it's actually a new piece of gear called the "Solid Eye System." As presented in the trailer, Snake activates the eyepiece and then sees, in first-person, all sorts of data overlaid onto the troops and vehicles in the street. There's also what appears to be a new version of the classic *MGS* radar in the upper right corner, and a readout on his current weapon in the bottom right. Snake is surrounded, but has avoided detection by the troops and new Metal Gears. Something else, however, is watching him. As he draws his gun, a tiny two-wheeled robot rolls up and a familiar



This shot from the trailer is from right after Snake takes down an enemy using CQC and "borrows" his rifle. Later, he'll upgrade it.



Even though Otacon appears on a tiny screen in the trailer, he's fully modeled and even pushes his glasses up when they slide down his nose.

**"YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE KEY
TO WINNING THE CONSOLE WAR"**

-OTACON ON THE CELL PROCESSOR, MGS4 TRAILER

Metal Gear Solid 4



Soldiers make their way down a dusty street in an unnamed city, as sand and debris are driven past them by the wind.



The new hybrid Metal Gears scan the environment for hostiles. The tiny text says they are in "SS" hunting mode, "target: organic."



Even within this squad, you can see soldiers wearing gear that's different from one another. Some are even wearing sunglasses.



Solid Snake injects himself with a mystery compound, while our own Bill Donohue (inset) awaits his royalty check.



voice is heard. It's Otacon, Snake's friend and backup during the tanker portion of *MGS2*. Well, the robot is actually called the Metal Gear Mark II; Otacon's just using its organic LED screen, top-mounted camera, and, as clearly pointed out by Otacon, a Cell processor, to communicate with Snake. The Mark II, as diehard Kojima fans may remember, actually appeared in one of his earlier games, *Snatcher*. From production sketches and its appearance in the trailer, it seems as if the Mark II will factor heavily into at least part of the game, possibly providing an advance scout capability for Snake.

Unlike Snake, Otacon doesn't appear to have aged

much. After lecturing Snake on the hazards of smoking, the two — Snake and the Mark II, that is — get moving. The trailer ends with Snake asking Otacon about the Cell processor, which is then described by the scientist as "the key to winning the console war" while Otacon's computer desktop (complete with *ZOE2* wallpaper) is shown displaying videos of the E3 rubber ducky tech demo and the *Killzone 3* trailer.

The gameplay, allies, and enemies

In an interview with Japanese game magazine *Weekly Famitsu* just before TGS, Kojima revealed a

few preliminary details on the game. The setting is, of course, a warzone. Within this setting, he explained, will be various factions at war. Alliances will be formed and broken.

Psychological warfare will play a key role. Snake will be able to effectively frighten enemies and decrease their combat effectiveness, not unlike Batman from *Batman Begins*.

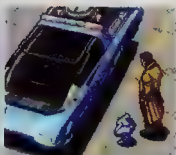
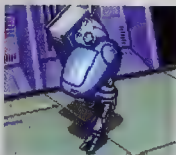
The enemies will also employ similar tactics. From his actions in the trailer, it also appears that Snake will not only be able to take weapons from enemies, but also modify them; he's shown sliding a grenade launcher onto his flashlight-equipped rifle at one point.

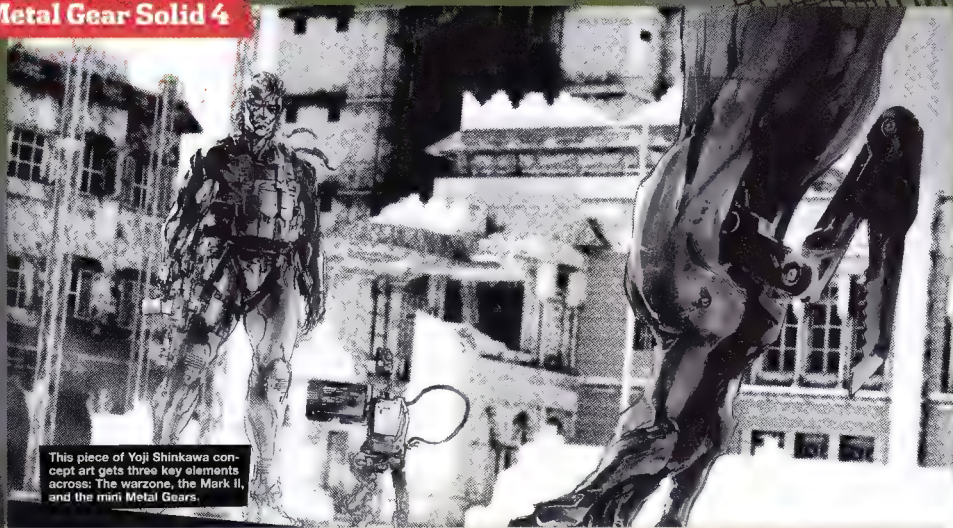
Speaking about realism, Kojima points out that creating amazing visuals isn't his

"KOJIMA POINTS OUT THAT CREATING AMAZING VISUALS ISN'T HIS PRIMARY GOAL"

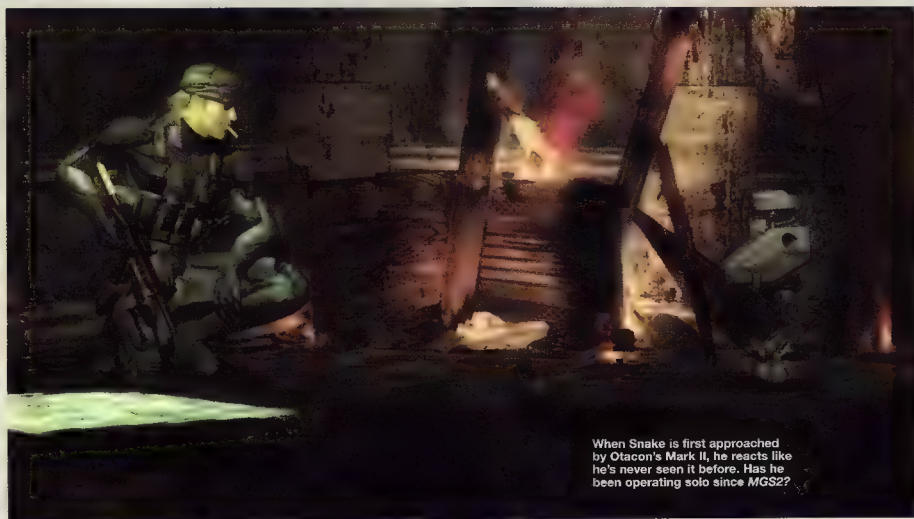
Meet the Metal Gear Mark II

This pint-sized robot is operated by Otacon and will be his means of helping and communicating with Snake for at least part of the game. This isn't the bot's first appearance, however. In fact, the Mark II was a sidekick character in Kojima's 1994 cyberpunk adventure for Sega CD, *Snatcher*. In that game, it aided main character Gillian Seed as he investigated robot-related murders. It's a great tip of the hat to old-school fans.





This piece of Yoji Shinkawa concept art gets three key elements across: The warzone, the Mark II, and the mini Metal Gears.



When Snake is first approached by Otacon's Mark II, he reacts like he's never seen it before. Has he been operating solo since *MGS2*?

primary goal (we can't begin to fathom how much better the game would look if it was) but rather he's interested in creating a "real" game world.

Things like the melting ice cubes in *MGS2* wowed us with their realism. This time, Kojima has used examples such as sand that will actually shift in the wind and saplings that will grow from trees if their seeds fall to the ground. Amazing...

and a testament to the power of the PlayStation 3.

So, what about the characters revealed in our issue 99 cover story? Apart from Solid Snake and Otacon, they were nowhere to be seen in the trailer. Kojima has promised that the reintroduction of Raiden will have players thinking the much joked about *MGS2* character is now very cool. The title, *Guns of The Patriots*,

combined with the concept of multiple factions at war, could see a scenario wherein Snake is operating solo, while Raiden is on a covert op and other armies are led by Vamp, Meryl, and Revolver Ocelot.

Then there's the question of Snake's age. Kojima is being very secretive about exactly how long after the events of *MGS2* this game will take place. The trailer even states "X years

after Big Shell." Given that Snake appears to have aged significantly compared to Otacon, we suspect it has to do with the cloning process used to create Snake. Battling against his accelerating aging could play a significant role in the game.

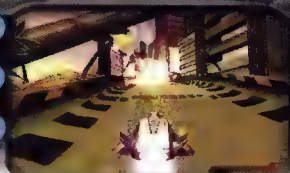
Simply stunning

You don't need us to tell you how amazing *MGS4* looks; just check out the screens. It's even

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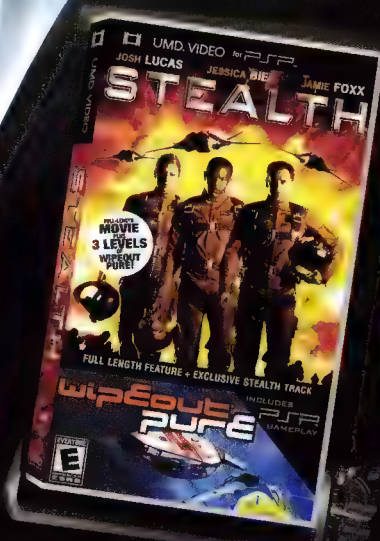
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PG-13

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Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13

Sneak peek: Snake's happy to see his old friend, even if it's just on a screen. Here, the Mark II is handing him an ammo clip it found.

better in motion, running at 60 frames per second with incredible atmosphere and animation. In fact, before debuting the trailer, Kojima and his team took some time to show off the attention to detail in the game by actually pausing the trailer and playing around with it – no doubt about it, this wasn't "faked" footage.

Examples shown included the clarity of even the tiniest lettering on Snake's sneaking suit and the fact that Otacon's appearance on the Mark II's screen wasn't just a video texture: It, too, was being generated in real time. Kojima elaborated by moving the camera in on the screen and changing the lighting in the room Otacon was broadcasting from. You could even see the fine, screen-door-like surface texture of the OLED display.

When will we see more?

That's the big question. PSM's sources have told us that

Kojima was asked by Sony Computer Entertainment boss Ken Kutaragi directly

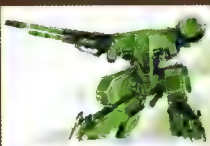
to please prepare an MGS4 trailer for TGS. Mr. Kojima had previously told PSM that he was working on a trailer for the game to be debuted at E3 2006. Sony intends to have PS3 at the Consumer Electronics Show in January, but it's uncertain if Kojima will show another trailer then, or simply wait until E3. One thing is for certain: No matter how amazing it was, this was just a teaser of what's to come. The full, grand MGS4 trailer will – in Kojima tradition – leave us more speechless and full of plot questions. Add to that the fact that all of the MGS games have only gotten better looking between the trailers and finals games and we couldn't be more excited.

A New Breed of Metal Gear

Will there be a battle with a hulking new Metal Gear to cap off MGS4? Almost certainly. But there will also be a breed of new mini-Metal Gears undoubtedly derived from the data Revolver Ocelot has made off with in the previous games. These new MGs have top halves that look like the Metal Gear Rex from the original MGS and organic legs that are very similar in style to those of the Metal Gear Ray from MGS2.



In motion, the smaller Metal Gears' legs flex like there's actual muscle inside. At one point, they dig into the sand and kick it up.



A silver prototype Metal Gear Rex appeared in MGS1. This is a production version.



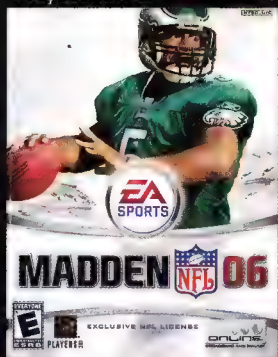
MGS2's submersible Metal Gear Ray looked very organic.

Don't Disappoint Yourself, Loved One or Significant Other.

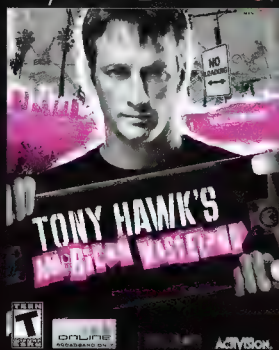
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PlayStation 2



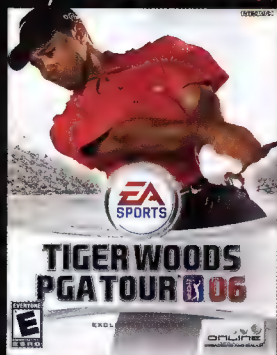
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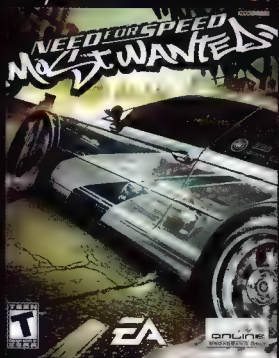
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TEEN T
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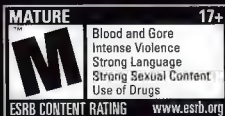
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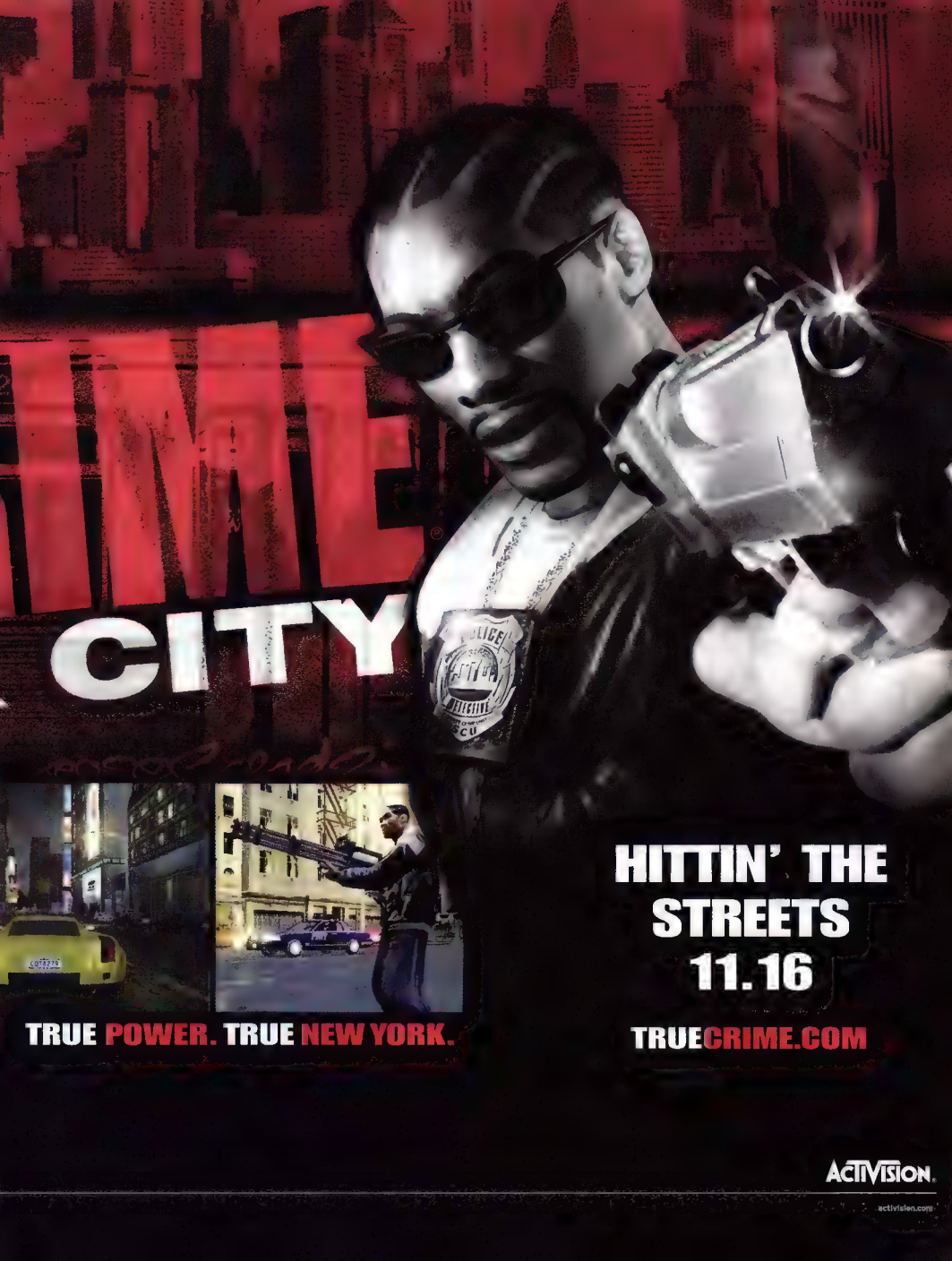
TRUE CONFLICT.



PlayStation 2



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Pitch the Pros

Your game ideas — reviewed by PS2's top game makers!

"Standup Revolution"



We'd suggest adding EyeToy support — so people near the player could "throw" tomatoes at them for making jokes like this one.

Dear Pitch The Pros, My idea for a new game is this: *Standup Revolution!* How does this work, you ask? Like most awful standup comedians, you get to be the comedians and play like *Karaoke Revolution*, only being a big jerk!

You would get to choose from some great comedians, like Caroline Rhea and Bobcat Goldwaite, or make your own stand up character, then, you start off in the beginning stages. If you don't make

the drunks happy at local bars, you get your butt booted off stage, and beer bottles get thrown at you, or you could come precautioned, with Chicken wire to protect you, until you reach the top of the heap, The Apollo.

There, you can get booted off stage, or be asked to give an encore. And you have to sound like the comedian's voice, or you'll lose points. In *Standup Revolution*, anything goes!

LOGAN ANDERSON, TROY, MT

THIS MONTH'S PRO:

ERIC MARCOULLIER

Director of Serious Games, Cyberlore
He worked on:
Playboy: The Mansion



Wow, Logan, I've seen some pretty amazing "Pitch the Pros" ideas in my day... and this ain't one of them. Ba-dump bump. The only system you'll ever see this game on is the PainStation. Zing! Take my Virtual Boy... please! But seriously, folks, this idea is so bad Majesco would think twice about releasing it.

Here's the problem: *Karaoke Revolution* works because it analyzes very rigid parameters, such as pitch, sync and tempo. Jokes are ephemeral, irreducible. The only thing rigid in comedy is Rodney Dangerfield's corpse. No respect, I tell ya! If we could scientifically analyze comedy, Jeff Foxworthy would have been out

on his ass years ago. So all we're left with is an impressions game and, sadly, no one wants to hear your Dave Chapelle impersonation.

And say we could make the technology work, there's still the fact that NOBODY WANTS TO BE A COMEDIAN! Funny is the last refuge of the ugly, Logan. People want to be cool, score a touchdown, battle aliens, save the day. The last thing Andy Dick scored was a couple grams of coke and the last thing Louis Anderson saved was room for desert. If I had a gong it would be sounding rigid now. As it is, I'll just have to say...

REJECTED!

Check out psmonline.com for details on how you can pitch the pros with your own game idea — and win a PSM prize pack, unlike Logan.

SMALL-TIME CRIMINALS



From left to right: Donald Love, "You," Salvatore Leon, 8-Ball, and Misty from *Grand Theft Auto III*.

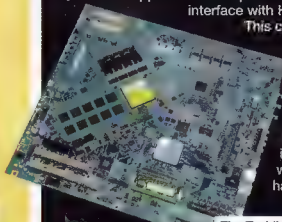
You don't need a big house for Medicom's GTA Kubricks

One of the biggest videogame sensations ever has spawned some of the smallest collectibles around. Medicom has made Kubrick figure sets for games such as *Metal Gear Solid* and *Devil May Cry*, and now's its turned its attention to the *Grand Theft Auto* series. The sets, each of which includes five figures and sells for \$40, debuted with *GTA3* characters in September, and will be followed up by a *Vice City* set in late fall and a *San Andreas* set early next year. Get 'em fast, though, because only 3,000 of each set will be available world-wide!

Toshiba's Cell-based PC: New PS3 features revealed?

Like the menus at a really fancy restaurant, the info sheet for Toshiba's Cell Reference Platform PC doesn't list prices — so you know it's going to cost a lot when it becomes available in April. The computer will feature a Toshiba-designed motherboard and a Cell processor supplied by IBM. What's of interest to PS3 watchers, however, is another chip on the motherboard: the Toshiba Super Companion Chip. This chip, which is also expected to be part of the PS3, handles video input and output, HD video output, networking, and, most intriguingly, digital tuner support. Although it's been speculated that Sony may remove PS3's second HDMI port to reduce production costs, the digital tuner support of this chip could let the console interface with HDTV receivers.

This could, in turn, pave the way for the console to act as a high-definition digital video recorder (DVR) via that second HDMI port — once it's been equipped with an optional hard disk drive.



The Toshiba Cell Reference motherboard.

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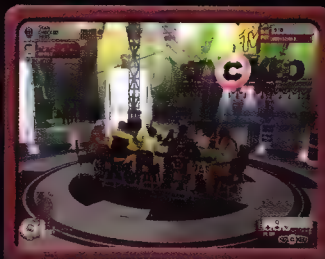
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INBOX

Have a question for the PSM team? Want to sound off about something we wrote? Visit psmonline.com to get in touch with us!

ALL ABOUT EVIL

Dear PSM,

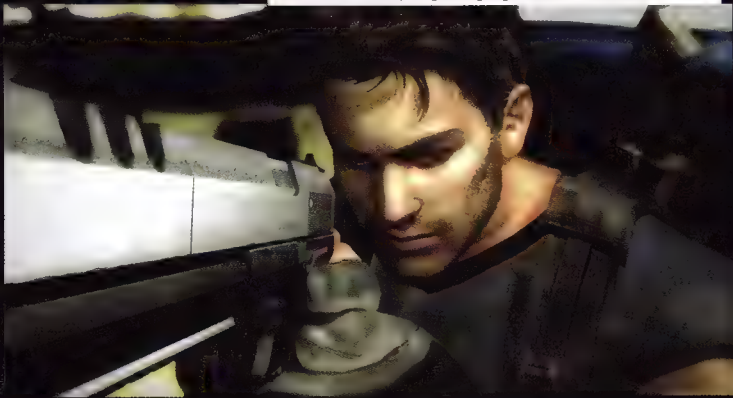
I just read the preview of *Resident Evil 5* in your October 2005 issue and began speculating on the main character. My brother Aaron went and grabbed all our old RE games and pointed out that he looks a lot like Billy Coen from *RE: Zero*. It would make sense that he would be a badass soldier because he's an ex-marine. Granted, I haven't got around to beating this *Resident Evil* game yet, so Billy may have died at the end, but then I realized dying has never stopped Capcom from putting characters in later games (Ada and Wesker come to mind). What do you guys think?

—Dane Burchette, North Wilkesboro, NC

ERIC: I think I wish I'd talked to you before I decided it must surely be Chris, because Billy may be an even better guess.

I do think it's funny that Capcom has conditioned us to automatically assume it's a returning character instead of a new one, though.

Whoever stars in *RE5*, the game's going to be one of the hottest on PS3.



Hi PSM,

A while back at the DICE convention, Jason Rubin announced that he was leaving Naughty Dog because developers weren't getting enough credit from the industry. This left me with the impression that he was going off to do something revolutionary that would right this wrong, and change the industry for the better. It's been a couple of years now, and I haven't seen him in any gaming news since. Is he working on some secret black project, is he gone for good, or have I just been looking in the wrong places? I'd appreciate any information you have or can get. —Mike Levine, Boston, MA

RANDY: It was a pretty big shock for everyone when Jason, who co-founded the developer that created *Crash Bandicoot* and *Jak* with PS2 tech guru Andy Gavin, left the company. While his initial plan did involve becoming a sort of "developer advocate" to bring recognition to game makers, much in the way that movie directors and artisans are celebrated for their work, the last I heard, he was actually looking at getting back into game development. In fact, Andy Gavin has departed from Naughty Dog as well, and there's a good chance we'll see the two collaborating again in the future. As great an idea as Jason had, it'll be nice to see him back making what will hopefully be some of the top games of the next generation.

Hey guys,

As the PS3 draws closer and closer a ques-

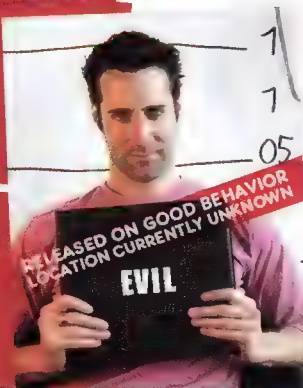
tion has been bothering me for a while continues to concern me. Is the PS2 going to continue on, will game makers forget us and leave those without a pricey PS3 in the gaming dark? I MUST KNOW! To be honest, with gas prices and such these days, I just can't come up with the funds to start over with a new console.

—John Root, Fort Mill, South Carolina

KAISER: Hola, John. The answer to your question is actually in your question. See, like you said, there will be a number of people who can't afford a presumably pricey PS3 in the first year, maybe longer. Who wants to make games for a system no one owns? This means you can expect some overlap in the development of games for both the PS2 and PS3, like we saw when we made the switch from the PSone to the PS2. Be aware that the number of big franchise games on PS2 is likely to dwindle down, as developers move forward. After all, the launch period/first year of a new console is also a great time to establish new franchises and make a quick buck as new console owners tend to gobble up every game in sight.

Hi guys,

You gave *Midnight Club 3: Dub Edition* for PSP a 6.5 out of 10 mainly because of horrible load times. I own it and it's pretty bad. Think of this: What if *Liberty City Stories* has horrible load times? I'd just die. I'm loyal to Rockstar and their games and pray they don't do it again. But even if *GTA* for PSP is a great game



We'll hopefully hear what Naughty Dog co-founder has been working on all this time at E3 2006. But what if it's not for PS3?

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Oogie Boogie has kidnapped holiday leaders, with plans to unleash a diabolical plot on Halloween Town. Now, Jack Skellington must use his shape-changing Soul Robber to take down Oogie and other evil mega-bosses.



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PLAYSTATION 2



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THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS
Oogie's Revenge

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www.Nightmare.net

NOT VERY OLD SCHOOL

My name is Kyra Davala from Tigard, Oregon. I am 9 months old. When I'm not screamin', I'm a watchin' the PlayStation. Here's a few of my favorites:

5. *SkullMonkeys*: I'm all about the gooty songs. My dad plays them over and over again. Classic platforming at its best, and hardest.

4. *Henshin-a-go-go* baby! Yes, I am a *Wrestful* Joe baby. Who can forget the first time I saw my Pop cap a bad guy by flippin' a bullet back at him?

3. *Final Fantasy VIII*: I know I wasn't around when this first came out, but my parents are playing it again and say the junction system and storyline



Thanks! —Kyra Davala, Tigard, OR (transcribed by her dad, Steve)

CHRIS: This baby isn't playing her own games yet? Tsk, tsk — parenting these days.

ERIC: Hey! You stole my Reader Top 5!

are the best in the series.

2. *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater*: When I was a month old, the only thing that would cheer me up was the opening song. Someday I'll eat a tree frog, I know it.

1. *Katamari Damacy*: I can sit there all day and watch the wackiness... the songs, the rolling. I can't get enough.

will you give it a bad score over load times?

—Elmano, Hamilton, SC

ERIC: Well, that depends upon just how long the loads are and just how strong the gameplay is, because it's a balance, you know? Long loads are more of a problem in things like racing and golf games, because they're so frequent. If they only occurred every half hour, it wouldn't be an issue. This is actually all a moot point, because we've played *Liberty City Stories*, and it streams most of the time, just like its big brothers. Very little loading.

Hello PSM,

I was wondering if there is another *Tekken Tag* coming out soon because the first one was an amazing game. Do you have any idea if there will be a sequel?

—Waleed Ahmad, Fitchburg, MA

RANDY: You know, Waleed, we've actually been getting this question a lot lately. Back at E3, Namco revealed that they were working on a new *Tekken* game for PS3. While it would seem pretty much a given that this would be *Tekken 6*, I've also heard through the developer grapevine that it will, in fact, be a PS3-only follow-up to *Tekken Tag Tournament* and will launch alongside the system in Japan and the U.S. We'll definitely keep you keyed in as we hear more!

Dear PSM,

I've loved gaming since I got a Super Nintendo when I was like five or so. The past year or so though is when I've started taking my love to a whole new level. It's a level most gamers have been at for years, but hey, I'm only fifteen as of yesterday and my mom is a video game hater. My first

year's subscription has just ended, and throughout it I've been wondering what the hell you're talking about. I'm a bit slow on video game lingo. To help out readers like me, I think you should include a gaming lingo dictionary in your next issue. You could include acronyms (like HDD) and genres (like platformers). Until a few months ago I had no clue what HDD or platformer meant! —Ryan

CHRIS: That's a tough one, Ryan. We do try to avoid slinging around acronyms and tech speak, but sometimes it's unavoidable — how else could we label a platformer? We'll do our best to make things easily understandable for everybody, but unfortunately, newcomers will always have to play a little catch up.

that object is rotating at, oh... 33 RPM. Believe it or not, only the outermost edge of the object is traveling at 33 RPM! Any inner ring component is traveling slower, therefore covering less distance, so the dots appear to be moving the same speed, even though they're not. I recently had the opportunity to verify my theorem on Highway 101 North, where I was traveling at, uh... a 'high' rate of speed in the slow lane going around a 180 degree arc curve. The cop car in the fast lane had absolutely no trouble matching my speed or position. Go figure...

800-LB GORILLA: Both points are fixed to the same object and

RANTS & RAVES!



RANT: I had just bought the PSP, like, a real sucker for having a PSP. I've been around for six months and I only a small handful of recent games have been put out for it, and only one that I like. And most of the games really suck. And ports? And I can't think of a time that I really put the urge to put out a handheld player, and I was a movie that I could have bought for cheaper online and watched in the comfort of my own home.

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Ask A Stupid QUESTION...

THE 800-POUND GORILLA GIVES YOU AN ANSWER!

READER: You take a record on a record player. You pick a spot close to the center of the record, use a sticker to mark the spot. Then you pick a spot close to the outside edge of the record, in line with the inside spot. Turn the record player on to whatever speed. The two spots will hit the same points of their respective origins at the same

time. Both spots travel at the same speed, but the outside spot travels a much greater distance. And they will always be in sync with each other. What's up with that?

Cesar Gonzalez, wulfnight1@hotmail.com

800-LB GORILLA: Both points are fixed to the same object and

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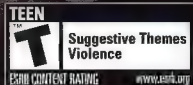
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PlayStation 2



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FANDOM

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HIT US WITH YOUR BEST STUFF!

Get over to psmonline.com and submit your displays of fandom — fan art, cosplay, custom toys... you name it, we want it! The best of the best will be displayed here each issue!

CAST A VOTE FOR YOUR FAVE FANDOM!

That's right — we're taking our fandom section to the next level. Here's how it works: log up the FPM web site at www.psmonline.com and cast your vote for which of this month's fandom submissions is the best. We'll announce the winner in the Holiday issue, and they'll score a free FPM prize pack!



Gabriel Timothy Lim is back — this time with a Yoji Shinkawa inspired Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots piece. Awesome!

This latest take on the Darkstalkers cast was sent in by Nathan Hahl.



NOVEMBER'S BEST FANDOM!



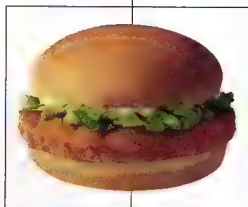
That awesome best of the best... and free FPM Prize Pack goes to **GABRIEL TIMOTHY LIM** for his poster-worthy Beyond The Grave from: Gungrave. Does Kinkos do posters? Hmm...

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and they get all mad.**

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**Unlike towels or speaker wire
which can get kinda pricey.**



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PREVIEWS

The game of Piggyback has never been so intensely challenging...

BACK TO THE PAST

Prince of Persia: Revelations

Finally, a Prince that fits in our pockets



PRINCE OF PERSIA

PUBLISHED BY
Ubisoft

MADE BY
Pipeworks

WHAT IS THIS?
A port of one of last year's best games, with new content

ESRB RATING
Not yet rated

IT COMES OUT
December

MULTIPLAYER
No

ONLINE
No

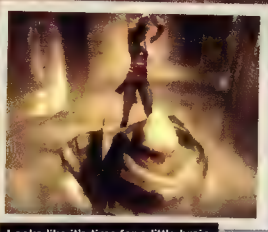
Yeah, we know – another port of a console game for the PSP, right? Well, yes, but when it's port of one of our favorite games from 2004, we take a little more interest in it. Ubisoft is bringing the *Prince of Persia* series to Sony's portable system with *Revelations*, a sort of extended version of *Warrior Within*.

In case you weren't one of the millions of people to play the original game, the story goes a little something like this: the Prince is being hunted. Not by some lowly bounty hunter, or even a wicked enemy of sorts. No, the Prince doesn't have it that good – he's being chased down by Fate itself. His death has been foretold, and damn if

the Prince isn't going to try to do the impossible and avoid his inevitable destiny.

As is common knowledge now, *Warrior Within* was the game that took the series to a much darker place; the visual style is far more sinister, and the combat as equally brutal. The gameplay also took a slightly diverted path from the original game by upping the emphasis on the combat. Additionally, a new free-form fighting system was implemented that made combat less redundant and more reflective of the player's personal fighting style.

Well, in *Revelations*, not much has changed. Every bit of the original console game is intact in the PSP



Looks like it's time for a little brain salad surgery. Remember to cut on the dotted line.

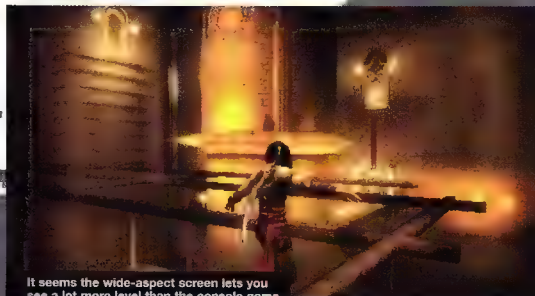
version, from the bleak-but-beautiful graphics to the improved gameplay mechanics. But there's a reason this game is called *Revelations* and not *Warrior Within*: there are over thirty new rooms in the game, each seamlessly integrated into the original level designs and featuring more of the same great platforming, puzzle-solving, and merciless fighting.

Without giving away any of the story (for those Prince noobs), we can say that the first of the new content appears about a fourth of the way through the game, in the Throne Guard Tower. Later, before reaching the Mechanical Guard Tower part of the game, there is another chunk of gameplay that's been added that features a clever new staircase puzzle to solve. Another new level extension is included right before the Garden Guard Tower segment of the game,



Just cause he's portable doesn't mean this guy's gonna be any smaller — or easier.

“EVEN VETERANS OF THE GAME WILL HAVE A REASON TO PLAY THROUGH IT AGAIN”



It seems the wide-aspect screen lets you see a lot more level than the console game.

and will have you navigating past a raging river and through a deadly water tower.

The most significant of the new content is a dungeon level that's made up of a series of rooms, traps, and puzzles. After maneuvering past deadly crunch blocks, balancing your way on countless fragile beams, and figuring out some of the platforming puzzles, you'll come to the Elemental Temple. This temple is composed of four elemental-themed hallways (earth, air, fire, and water), and an inner temple.

In the lava-filled fire hall, you'll encounter a lot of rope swings, wall-running, and timed drops. The earth hall is an older, inactive lava tunnel where most of the gameplay centers around block traps and stalagmite (think columns) jumps. Eventually you'll reach an underground river full of overgrown roots and branches



We wonder if the Prince ever has dreams of walking the plank...

that dumps out at a waterfall (yes, this is the water hall). Here, your ledge-walking and jumping skills will be put to the ultimate test. After completing the water hall, the air hall makes its appearance. This hall is so vast and open that the floors and walls are barely even visible. Long jumps and more column navigation are the order of the day, topped off with a number of guards to battle.

Completing this level leads you to the inner temple, a volcanic cavern featuring four god statues: the air spirit, the earth goddess, the water maiden, and the fire demon. At the top of this room is a great treasure, but getting up there is the problem. Conveniently enough, each of these elemental statues is a platforming puzzle that will lead you to the top. Claim your prize and you're right back into the game as if the level were part of the original game from day one.

All in all, *PoP Revelations* should be a great addition to the PSP library seeing as how its lacking in the action-adventure genre. With the new content, even veterans of the game will have a reason to play through it again. After all, what *Prince* fan can turn down more of the brilliant gameplay we've come to expect from the series? We definitely can't.

KAISER HWANG

What is Assassins?



The detail of that chain mail is simply amazing.

The *Prince* team has been busy lately. With a PSP game and a PS2 game on the horizon, we were amazed to see the trailer for their PS3 title, *Assassins*. We can't say much about the game now, but it looks really hot. Could the game be related to *Prince* in any way? Hmm...

The Two Thrones

Console fans worry not — there's a new *Prince* game for the consoles. So, *Prince of Persia 3*, once known as *Kindred Blades*, has finally received an official title: *Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones*. It's clear that the name is emphasizing the theme of duality in the game and its two playable characters. Only time will tell, though, if the two *Prince* games can actually hold both the console and portable thrones.





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PUNK, BIT BOY,
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TEEN

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ESRB CONTENT RATING

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Crude Humor
Language
Suggestive Themes
Violence

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activision.com



50's most devastating moves are his "counter kills," which tend to result in someone else getting shot at point-blank range.

BEAT THE RAP

50 Cent: Bulletproof

Fiddy's got this shooter Dead to Rights

50 Cent is not a regular guy. He's built like Mike Tyson, tattooed like a Hell's Angel, and he's a rap star. Oh yeah — he's also survived not only being stabbed, but being shot... nine times.

The point to this little biography is that 50 Cent is larger than life, and more like a videogame character than just about any other living person — which may be one of the reasons that *50 Cent: Bulletproof* looks better than just about any celebrity-endorsed game ever.

At its core, *50 Cent: Bulletproof* has a great deal in common with the first *Dead to Rights* (with which it shares at least one key dev team member), but it looks better in almost every way.

The graphics are vastly improved, the soundtrack (about four CDs worth) is wonderful and customizable, and the story was written by Terry Winter, who won an Emmy for his work on the hit HBO series, *The Sopranos*.

The game begins with 50 getting a cell phone call from a friend

in trouble. He collects three of his G-Unit crew and sets off to meet his friend. They arrive at the rendezvous only to find it crawling with heavily armed thugs.

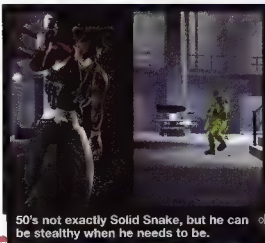
Here's where the game starts to show its uniqueness. First off, there's a bit of a squad-based team dynamic. See, each of 50's comrades has a certain skill: one knows demolitions, one is a weapons expert, and another is an expert at picking locks. They all fight alongside you, like bots in *SOCOM*, and can use their skills to help you out (the AI's not too shabby, either). Additionally, you may recognize some of them; along with the standard G-Unit posse, Eminem and Dr. Dre play in-game characters as well.

Other handy features are 50's ability to pick up and use enemies' weapons, dual-wield, and use an enemy as a human shield. He also has at his disposal 30 brutal "counter kills" — gangsta-style executions that are essentially this game's take on the elaborate disarms in *Dead to Rights*.

The gameplay may have its roots in *Dead to Rights*, but the visuals are far, far better.



There's a surprising amount of teamwork involved, like when you keep the enemies occupied while a partner picks a lock.



50's not exactly Solid Snake, but he can be stealthy when he needs to be.

Brutal? Yeah. Cool? Double yeah.

The opening shootout ends with 50 getting ambushed and shot — you guessed it — nine times. After that, it's all about finding and extracting some vengeance upon the shooters. We'll have to wait and see how 50's quest ends, but we're eager to begin the hunt. **ERIC BRATCHER**

50 CENT: BULLETPROOF
PUBLISHED BY
Vivendi

MADE BY
Genuine Games

WHAT IS THIS?
A third person shooter similar to *Dead to Rights*, but starring 50 Cent

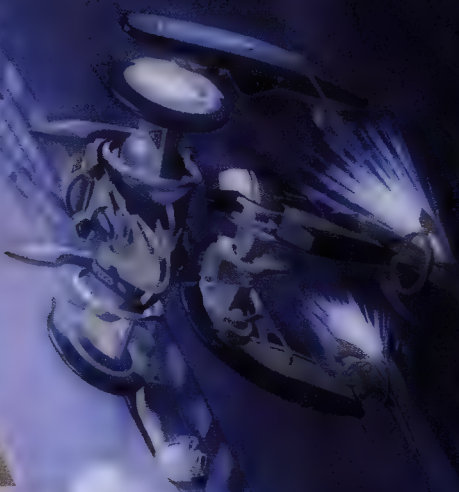
ESRB RATING
Mature

IT COMES OUT
November

MULTIPLAYER
None

ONLINE
None

FAST LANE LIFE IN THE



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thelgpx.com

CARTOON NETWORK

You won't see these 3D urban environments in other dancing games.



FLOW: Urban Dance Uprising

Out with the J-pop, and in with the hip-hop

The rhythm-dance genre is pretty much ruled by all things *DDR*. Not a bad thing, since the game is and always has been great from a gameplay perspective. The problem is that the game's musical selection (pop and dance songs) caters to a very specific crowd and can turn off potential players. What about all the urban youth who are into hip-hop and are being targeted with games like *Getting Up*, *25 to Life*, *GTA*, and *Urban Reign*? Do you think they really want to dance to the Rage Mix of Akira Yamaoka's *Your Rain*? Exactly.

In comes Ubisoft to the rescue with *FLOW: Urban Dance Uprising*. Gameplay is very much like *DDR* — press (or step on) the corresponding onscreen direction in time with the music. The biggest difference here is that the soundtrack is centered around hip-hop. And we don't mean that

cheesy contemporary stuff. We're talking Sugar Hill Gang, Kurtis Blow, and Eric B. & Rakim hip-hop. This is old school, and just the way we like it.

Likewise, the game eschews the peppy, bright look of the *DDR* games and presents the game with much more urban flair. Complementing the city environments are selectable characters that break-dance with style (they have up to 300 moves), all in full 3D. We have to admit that we're surprised no one's done this before.

In the end, we think this game can hold its own against the undisputed rhythm champion, *DDR*. With 40 songs, 10 characters, 100 challenges, a workout mode, EyeToy functionality, and support for eight players, we can't really think of anything the game is missing. Well, except for that Akira Yamaoka song... **KAISER HWANG**

FLOW: URBAN DANCE UPRISING

PUBLISHED BY
Ubisoft

MADE BY
Artificial Mind and Movement

WHAT IS THIS?
DDR action only with hip-hop

ESRB RATING
Pending

IT COMES OUT
December

MULTIPLAYER
8 players

ONLINE
No



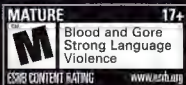
Thankfully, you don't actually have to know how to break-dance to pull off moves like this. It doesn't hurt, though.

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www.stalkerperfume.com

Combo Trial

New snazzy variations to the Judgment Ring combat include a new combo system for executing two attacks in one turn.



BRAVE NEW WORLD

Shadow Hearts: From the New World

One ring to rule them all... again

The United States — 50 states in all, each one as environmentally and culturally diverse as the next.

According to the third chapter in the *Shadow Hearts* RPG series, *Shadow Hearts: From the New World*, they've also got lots of monsters and green-lit portals into other worlds. But when has *Shadow Hearts'* irreverent humor and revisionist take on history ever detracted from the series? Never, really. This time around, though, the storyline abandons its retro-European roots (goodbye, Yuri...) and heads straight for North American shores.

Sixteen-year-old Johnny Garland is your new point of contact as you take him on a cross-country wild goose chase hunting down an escaped criminal who's been sucked into a giant otherworldly portal. Conspicuous portal aside, why is little Johnny chasing a convict? Because he's a full-fledged detective, of course! His partner, Shania, a Native American who'll most likely have specific special abilities, is also along for the ride. To complicate matters, Johnny's got baggage — he's recently survived an accident that's left him fatherless, sister-less, and memory-free. So, expect to solve more than one mystery while you're seeing the sights.

From the various locales you'll visit,

it seems that the team at Nautilus really wanted to cover as much ground as possible, with as much variation between environments as possible. Traipse through Chicago, Las Vegas and even New York, gathering new friends and allies along the way. With the series' penchant for giving otherwise real-world locations a fantasy sci-fi twist, we're eager to see what they've cooked up for familiar American landmarks.

From a gameplay standpoint, the signature Judgment Ring system remains intact, giving players some real-time interactions in a turn-based battle format. Nautilus has also added a few new combat goodies to increase the depth of the Judgment Ring: "Stock System" (pair up with another character in your party for combo attacks) and "Double" commands (if you're good enough, you'll be able to double up your attacks in battle).

All of these features, along with *Shadow Hearts'* emphasis on rich characters and humorous-but-engaging plotlines promises to be more than enough to tempt RPG lovers into its fold. For the rest of us who've adored the excellent series from the start, *Shadow Hearts: From the New World* had us at "hello." **FRANCESCA REYES**



Combat is definitely a standout thrill in the entire *Shadow Hearts* series, and *New World* shouldn't be any different. Unless you can't feel.

Melting Pot

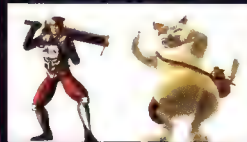
How many wacky characters can *Shadow Hearts* squeeze into its cast of new faces? Quite a few.



Ricardo's a flamenco style guitarist? The girl is Shania. No, not Twain.



Is Hildegarde representing the Sailor Moon contingent? Wild guess: Nathan is the quiet, stoic type. Pretty hunky, too.



Of all the names for a guy who wears cat ears, why "Frank"? Oh, and there's a cat. Please, don't ask...

**SHADOW HEARTS:
FROM THE NEW
WORLD**

PUBLISHED BY
XSeed Games

MADE BY
Nautilus

WHAT IS THIS?
Traditional turn-
based RPG

ESRB RATING
Pending

IT COMES OUT
Q1 2006

MULTIPLAYER
No

ONLINE
No

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Los Angeles, CA
Marina Del Ray Theatre

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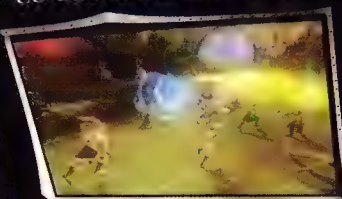
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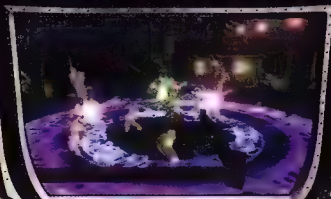
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PlayStation 2





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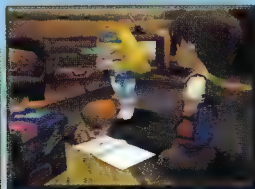
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PlayStation.2

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THE PSP SONY DOESN'T WANT YOU TO HAVE

Smoother framerates, faster loading, and even watching UMDs on your TV are possible... if only Sony wasn't trying its best to stop it



Besides more games, what could make PSP even better? Last issue, we took a look at how Sony's handheld could be making a bigger splash than it is for all gamers, but there are already an elite few who have taken

matters into their own hands. Not content to just watch movies and play the occasional game on their PSPs, devoted hardware hackers have found ways to make it do much more – and Sony's trying to thwart them at every turn.

When the PSP was launched in Japan, it came pre loaded with version 1.0 of the PSP firmware, essentially its built-in operating system. In their haste to get the PSP to market, Sony overlooked some security flaws in the firmware that enabled it to run programs it hadn't approved (or "signed") from a Memory Stick Duo. Technological tinkers soon discovered this flaw, and within a matter of days had emulators enabling PSP owners to run homebrew (fan created) software and emulators for classic console systems from the 8-bit NES to the Neo-Geo CD on their 1.0-fueled units.

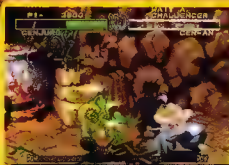
Sony quickly realized their mistake and

the hole were supposedly plugged in the next firmware update. It didn't take long before resourceful (and probably game-starved) PSP hackers found a way around the lockouts in version 1.5 (which U.S. PSPs shipped with) of the firmware. Since then, web sites such as psp-news.dcemu.co.uk and psupdates.com have become home to a growing community of homebrew programmers constantly working to make the PSP perform new tricks.

While some of them could definitely be looked at as opening the door wide open for PSP game piracy, the majority have a very legitimate – not to mention very

cool – uses. The PSP owners enjoying these capabilities have given up the ability to play newer games that require firmware more recent than 1.5 on the system, but they're having so much fun, they don't seem to mind. Some have even bought a second PSP just to play PSP games. Not all of the hacks are software-based, either. Here's a look at some of the things Sony would rather not have you doing if you own a PSP with v1.0 or 1.5 firmware (you can check which one you're running by selecting "System Information" from the System Settings sub-section of the PSP's main Settings menu.

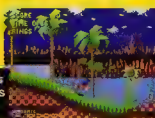
CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



If you're fortunate enough to own games for this slow-loading beast, you can take *Samurai Shodown* and the *King of Fighters* series on the go.

Sonic The Hedgehog on PSP – he runs so fast, however, that the screen starts to "smear."

Mario running on a Sony system. Hell is still quite hot, we're sure.



Emulators

For obvious reasons, these are some of the most popular PSP homebrew apps. By installing them on your Memory Stick and placing game ROMs for old-school titles you still own – or purchasing ones you don't from a legal ROM site such as www.starroms.com – you can relive the systems of yesteryear on the go. There are already great emulators for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), Super Nintendo, TurboGrafx-16, Game Boy Color, and Neo-Geo CD-ROM.

All of them run at nearly the full speed of the original console or handheld, and they're getting better on an almost weekly basis. There are even classic computer emulators, and one crafty coder has managed to get Windows 95 running on PSP!

Many obscure systems and computers are also emulated, but the Game Boy Advance has proven to be the most difficult hardware to mimic, so your dreams of playing the great GBA games you have on PSP's awesome screen will have to remain just that – dreams – for quite a while.

Overclocking

Two homebrew apps – Fastloader and Devhook – are dubious, but have definite advantages for gamers who're on the level. One of these is to run your PSP games at the full CPU speed of the handheld: 333MHz. For power-saving reasons, Sony "locked" the chip at 222MHz for production, but with these apps, you can reap benefits such as playing *Wipeout Pure* at a sweet, constant 60-frames-per-second thanks to the added processing oomph.



Playing *Wipeout Pure* at 60fps feels so much better it almost justifies scouring eBay for a pre-1.51 firmware PSP.

Faster loading

Fastloader and Devhook also let you copy your legally purchased PSP UMD games onto the memory stick, provided you have a large enough one (1GB sticks are going for less than \$100 now). The major benefit: shorter loading times.

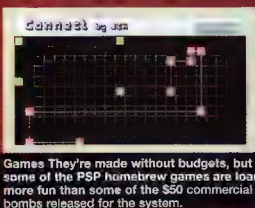
PDA capabilities

If you really have to have your PSP do everything, home-based developers have you covered with a variety of notepad, calendar, and calculator apps. There are also a handful of good text readers, image viewers, and movie file players available.



Calendar viewers, datebooks, and AVI players are easy to come by in the homebrew scene. There are even more obscure apps, like this portable rhythm composer to play around with.

Homebrew Games



Games They're made without budgets, but some of the PSP homebrew games are loads more fun than some of the \$50 commercial bombs released for the system.

PSP programming dabblers have also crafted their own versions of classic games, such as *Breakout*, for the PSP. The cooler thing about this aspect of the PSP coding scene is that many programmers are designing their own original games for the system. They may not look like a big game from a large publisher, but some of them are damn fun.

Tech Demos

The PSP hacking community web sites are loaded with all sorts of neat programs that show off the PSP's graphics technology. The upside is that they're all relatively small, so you can throw a dozen or so on a Memory Stick and just trash 'em when you're done.



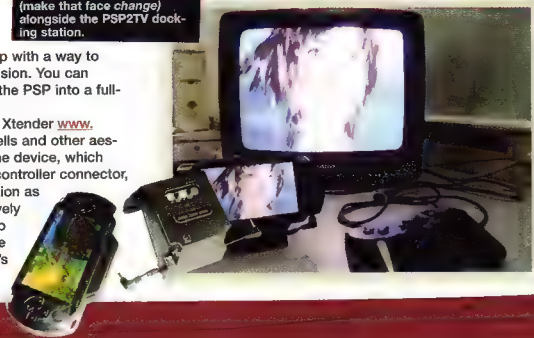
Tech Garage coders are pulling off some amazing effects on PSP.

PSP on your TV?

No, you're not hallucinating. Someone really has come up with a way to view PSP games and UMD movies on a standard television. You can even hook up a Dual Shock 2 controller, effectively turning the PSP into a full-fledged home game console.

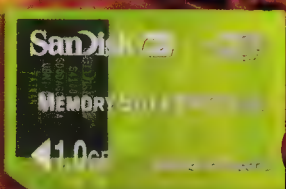
The device in question was created by the folks at Team Xtender www.teamxtender.com, who have been creating replacement shells and other aesthetic system mods for quite some time. Development of the device, which has a standard set of AV outputs and a single PlayStation controller connector, has been moving ahead briskly, and it should be in production as you read this. The only rub: although the PSP2TV is effectively a "docking cradle" design, modding your PSP to connect to it does require replacing the original PSP faceplate with one provided by Team Xtender. This, of course, voids your PSP's warranty and Sony won't repair modified units.

The PSP after its facelift (make that face change) alongside the PSP2TV docking station.



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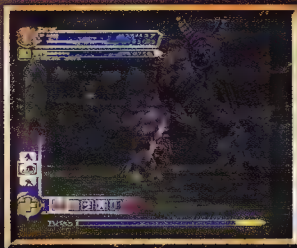
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FIVE WAYS THE PLAYSTATION 3 WILL CHANGE GAMES

Better eye candy alone won't be what makes the PS3 experience a truly next-generation one

With every new generation of game systems, the first question on everyone's mind is "How much better will the graphics be?" We already know the answer to that when it comes to PS3 versus PS2: a *whole* lot better. With this generation, however, people making games will have a lot more computing brains to call upon in addition to the usual jump in graphical brawn we're used to.

The idea: don't just make games look more like the real world (or a really cool fantasy universe), but actually *feel* like it, too. Games like *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* and *Metal Gear Solid 3* have already shown us a glimpse of how fun more realistic worlds can be. The next step in this evolutionary process will see enemies that act just like real people and learn from your every move; levels so interactive you can spend hours seeing how much damage you can do, or exploit the fact to come up with a quick and creative escape plan; or how about never seeing the same canned animation twice?

Not every game will do this stuff, but the ability to will still exist for game makers with the time and creativity to tap into it. Let's take a look at just a few of the new gameplay experiences that PS3 will make possible.

PLAYSTATION

1

The end of the "disappearing act"

In theory: Everything that happens in or to the game world will be persistent.

In action: You break it, it stays broken. You kill "em, they pile up. Even when you go back to previously visited areas later in the game, you'll see the path of destruction you've left behind — enemies may even have decomposed or trees rotted. You definitely won't have to ask yourself "Have I been through this area before?"

2

Great minds think alike

In theory: Enemies will react to what your character does and the situation they're in more realistically than ever. In fact, they'll be able to be nearly as smart and adaptive as the player.

In action: Enemies will run out of ammo and ditch their gun for another one — maybe even a better one. Maybe the gun you were hoping to grab. They might also dash for the same ammo pick-up available to you, abandoning their cover and opening them up for a clearer shot. Remember shooting out lights and using night vision goggles to sneak up on enemies? Now they'll use that trick, too... so you'll have to make sure you can see in the dark as well.



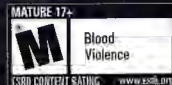
Metal Gear creator Hideo Kojima is already talking about using psychological warfare against enemies in part four... and the fact that they'll also use it against you.

"ONE OF THE FALL'S"

"WE HAVEN'T SEEN AN ACTION GAME
THIS PROMISING SINCE GOD OF WAR" PSM

"IT'S A PURE ACTION AFFAIR" EGM

"AS FANTASTIC AS IT IS EPIC" NINTENDO POWER



PlayStation 2



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RESIDENT EVIL 4

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Games that score an 8, 9 or 10 earn a PSM Buy-Or-Die Award. We don't hand these beauties out easily, so if you see one on a review or anywhere else, you'll want to be sure to check that game out.

Finally, when looking up past scores, keep in mind that older games usually wouldn't fare as well if reviewed today since the bar is constantly being raised.

10 CLASSIC

A rare gem; our highest recommendation

9 OUTSTANDING

One of the better games you'll play all year

8 VERY GOOD

You can't go wrong

7 GOOD

A solid game

6 OKAY

Kind of fun, but no big deal

5 SO-SO

You've got to really love the subject matter

4 LACKING

Big flaws really hurt this game

3 BAD

Not fun at all

2 AWFUL

This game is an insult

1 WHY?

Why would anyone do this to us?

A tactical shooter without the tactics?

With its funny name and famously atrocious voice acting, the original *Resident Evil* gave gamers their first real taste of honest-to-goodness interactive fear. Capcom called it "survival horror" — everyone who played it just called it "awesome."

Two official sequels and a couple of side-stories — not to mention myriad spin-offs, ports, and repackagings — later, the fourth main chapter in the series has proven to be more than worth the wait. Much more than just a better looking game in the vein of *Resident Evil 3: Nemesis* with some minor new additions, *Resident Evil 4* has undergone a massive transformation into a better playing, more engaging, more astounding form of action-adventure game than we could have dreamed of, let alone asked for.

Knee-deep in the not-quite-dead

After night-countless games blasting our way

through flesh-eating zombies and mutant monstrosities, *RE4* takes us out of the U.S. and away from the *Night of The Living Dead* inspired shamblers — even the nefarious Umbrella corporation and its nasty superviruses are (mostly) out of the picture. For the uninitiated, the story centers on Leon S. Kennedy, the Raccoon City police officer who had a crapacular first day on the job in *Resident Evil 2*. Leon is now a special agent, sent to Europe on a mission to rescue the daughter of the U.S. president. He's barely gotten his new leather jacket broken in when he encounters the first of the game's new enemies: fast, smart, armed, but, most of all, bat-guano-crazy villagers — some wielding knives, others brandishing pitchforks, and more than enough swinging chainsaws — all relentless, all pants-wettingly scary. Total nightmare fuel.

Forget standing your ground and shooting. These folks are fast and numerous.

Luckily, *RE4*, unlike its predecessors, doesn't put you in tight alleyways or tiny rooms very often. Leon is in a village, and can go almost anywhere — inside of houses, up stairs, on their roofs — without loading. If you can think of a way to escape, you can probably do it. Push furniture in front of doors, climb up or down ladders (or push them over to keep enemies from using them), and jump out of windows Hollywood-style.

Change of perspective

Part and parcel with fighting *RE4*'s new breed of enemies — which get even more relentless and well-armed as you progress past the opening village — is the game's fresh new view and control setup. You control Leon from a unique perspective looking over his shoulder. Pressing the **△** button to aim brings you in even tighter, enabling you to precisely target different parts of enemies'



Just look at the size and scope of this environment. We're not just walking down hallways any more.



Leon's no Bruce Lee, but if an enemy gets close enough, he can unleash a mean roundhouse kick.



RESIDENT EVIL 4

PUBLISHED BY
Capcom

MADE BY
Capcom

HOW MUCH
+\$39.99

ESRB RATING
Mature

MULTIPLAYER
None

SUPPORTS
+ Pro Logic II
+ Widescreen
+ Progressive Scan

TRY THIS



It's a bad idea to let an enemy holding TNT to get this close. Even if you shoot him, there's gonna be a big boom.

Ada's back. Do we really need to say anything else?

PSM 10

PARADISE

★The level design, enemies, graphics, and gameplay are as good as it gets.

PARASITES

★The dialog could have been better, too much sub-menu surfing.

HOW IT STACKS UP

Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	10
Resident Evil 4	10
God of War	9.5
Cold Fear	7.5
The Suffering: Ties That Bind	6.5

★ One of the more important moves in *Resident Evil 4* is the 180-degree turn. Master it early and use it often. Also, be aware that there will be a point in the game where some enemies will sprout unusual... appendages... at times. When that happens, be aware that flash grenades do huge damage to these body parts.

The GameCube Connection

Capcom has begged the press not to compare the PS2 port of *RE4* to its GameCube predecessor during previews, concerned that it wouldn't be considered on its own merits. But now that the final version is here, we have to wonder what all the fuss was about: the PS2 version looks *stunning*, 98% identical to the GC build, it has extra levels, extra weapons, extra costumes, and full widescreen and progressive scan support. So, on its own — or anybody else's — merits, this version kicks the GC build right in the Las Plagas. What's not to love?



bodies, shoot weapons out of their hands, and even solve environment-based puzzles.

The new view also puts you more "into" the game for an intensified, up-close-and-personal sense of danger. Leon's control leans more toward the responsiveness of a traditional action game, so thrilling sequences where you leap across platforms, blast the head off an enemy, then slice another with your knife, dizzying them with a roundhouse kick are common. The action just feels great.

Movie-like moments

RE4, more than *Metal Gear Solid 3* even, is the closest yet a game has come to making you feel like you're the star of an action movie — without taking away control from you. In fact, it's to the extent that the game is packed with interactive moments during cinema scenes. There are lengthy sequences and even an entire boss battle that involve precise button timing, a la *God of War*'s battle mini-games. Sometimes it's used just for dodging larger enemy attacks, but it still helps make the action look and feel damn cool.

A meaty adventure

If you think that *RE4* sounds more action-packed than the first three *RE* games... well, it is. That's not to say there isn't a superb adventure aspect to the game, however. No

— Leon's mission spans several very unique locations, with plenty of puzzle solving and exploration within each. Two things the game is especially good at are constantly presenting new challenges and creating a game world that seems, despite the sci-fi horror story, very much real. It's not just a series of similar levels — it's an actual place. The amount of attention given to the design of the game's countless unique areas is astonishing, and something not seen in more than a handful of games.

The same level of dedication to making an amazing, memorable experience can be seen in the game's boss battles. Like the *Metal Gear Solid* series, every one will have you saying "Wow — that was the best boss battle ever!" ... until you reach the next one, which is even *better* than the last.

The weapon upgrade system is awesome, not to mention the weapon variety itself. There's a real feeling of accomplishment — and of becoming more and more of a badass — as you increase the firing rate, reload time, accuracy, and other attributes of your firearms. Blowing enemies 10 feet back with a maxed out riot gun or shooting through multiple enemies with one squeeze of your assault rifle's trigger is just plain cool.

So is the fact that once the game's over, it keeps on giving. There's an alternate mission with another character, a revisiting of earlier



The GameCube version already had some special Ada-only missions called "Assignment Ada," but the PS2 version adds in a ton more, called "Separate Ways".



There are several new tweaks to the PS2 version of *RE4*, such as this very powerful new laser weapon, the P.L.L. 412.



The enemies this time around aren't typical zombies. They're faster, smarter, and actually quite a bit nastier.



There's much more action than horror now, but Capcom hasn't left the series' traditional goofy puzzles completely behind.

SPILLS, THRILLS & SKILLS.



E Comic Mischief

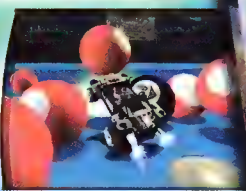
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The Lost RE4?

When it was first revealed, *Resident Evil 4* had a rather different form than the final game. The camera was still fixed (though it did zoom in for over-the-shoulder shooting), Leon had a flashlight that seemed pretty important, and there was a whole, haunted house thing going on with lots of mounted animal heads, a broken doll, and some shadowy dude with a meathook. Wild.

Haunted house-like settings such as this are vaguely reminiscent of what the first trailer implied *RE4* would be.



levels in an entire side-story, and an all-out arena-style kill-a-thon called "Mercenaries", featuring several unlockable characters and locations.

A gorgeous one, too

You'll be thinking (or saying out loud) the same thing about the game's graphics. Gameplay is paramount to any great game, but in *RE4*'s case, its appearance is every bit as important. Simply put, the game looks amazing. Its world is convincing and lived in; its art style and enemy designs are astounding. Every subtle character movement or lighting effect adds to the experience, drawing you into the role of Leon. It's all presented in true widescreen and progressive scan, too, if you've got the TV to handle it — and it looks great.

The music also does a remarkable job of putting you in the right mood for the current situation. Pounding beats kick in just when you thought the corridor ahead was clear, and send boss battles over the edge.

What isn't great, then?

RE4 is a very rare game — there's really little to find wrong with it amidst everything is does so very right. The only faults are minor annoyances, such as not being able to backpedal while aiming or the fact that you have to access a sub-menu to switch weapons. These will hopefully be addressed in *RE5*, already on its way to PS3. And while the game's voice acting is certainly much better than its laughable ancestors, its dialog and story — although quite good — still pales against the likes of *MGS3: Snake Eater*'s.

PS2's best game?

Long after the PlayStation 2 has been retired to the console hall of fame, people will argue, which was better: *RE4* or *MGS3*. They're just that close in terms of quality and enjoyment. It's a tough call for anyone to make, but in a pinch, we'd still give the overall nod to *Snake Eater*.

RE4 is nevertheless one game that we can easily say every PS2 owner should own. The wait for it to appear on PS2 was more than worth it, with all the tweaks, added weapons, costumes, and side-story mode. Not playing through it from beginning to end would be missing out on a major milestone in gaming history, not to mention a hell of a lot of fun.

RANDY NELSON

This is Ashley, the President's kidnapped daughter. Finding her is your goal, but your problems are far, far, far from over once you do.

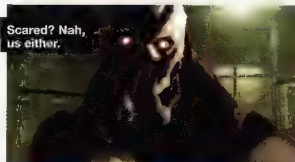
"WOW - THAT WAS THE BEST BOSS BATTLE EVER!"



Ashley introduces some great team play moments.



This is El Gigante. We don't know why he's called that.



Leon's first day on the job was the day it all went to pieces in Raccoon City. In other words, he's seen some s**t.

**SPECIAL
EXTRA**

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OWN RISK!**

SURPRISE!!!

**SURELY YOU
DIDN'T THINK A
SINGLE PAGE
COULD HOLD THE
SPOILER...**

**DID
YOU???**

THE RE4 SPOILER PAGE



PSM Staff speak: Our favorite RE4 moments...

Grocery List: New items in the PS2 version's cart

You've probably heard all this before, but just to be certain, the spoiler wanted to be sure to give you the lowdown on all the goodies Capcom has added for the PS2 port of *Resident Evil 4*.

Leon has a new weapon, the R.P.L. 412. It's a laser that yanks the Las Plagas parasites right out of the bad guys. Ouch.

Ada Wong also has a new weapon. It's a crossbow that shoots explosive bolts, 'nuff said.

Speaking of Ada, she's got a ton of new missions, called Separate Ways. It fills in a ton of the story, explaining what she was doing while Leon was doing this thing. Turns out, she rang the church bell, hung with Luis, and explored a barbershop Leon never saw.

Leon and Ashley both have a new costume. Leon's is a cool-looking gangster outfit. Ashley's is a suit of armor that lessens damage from enemy attacks and is also impervious to bullets, so you can't accidentally die.

There's a legit widescreen mode now, as well as 480p Progressive Scan. It's kind of tough to find, though – in the review build, we had to hold down all four face buttons while the game booted.

There's a legit widescreen mode now, as well as 480p Progressive Scan. It's kind of tough to find, though – in the review build, we had to hold down all four face buttons while the game booted.

Randy: How about the entire game? What you need specifics? Well, after being chased by Del Lago from its lake-monster-eye-view, I got that same feeling I did after watching jaws – that I never wanted to go swimming again. The sequence in the ruins being covered by poor Mike in his helicopter blew me away, too. Miiiiiihke!

Justin: The first time Leon's head gets chainsawed off is just freaky cool. And I dug Leon's knife fight with Krauser that used only the *Shemue*-like quick button presses. I thought it was pretty annoying when I had to keep retying after I kept falling, but after I finished it, I realized how cool it was.

Eric: Few things are more satisfying than shooting a frozen monster point-blank with a rocket launcher – thanks, Capcom! And there was a moment when Ashley was pulling switches and I was covering her heads with one shot – that was just too cool.

Chris: I loved the battle against not one, but two El

Ashley looks dopey in a suit of armor, but it sure keeps her safer.

Krauser – still a bastard, but a great boss battle.

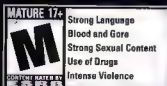
Krauser: I was really wowed by the boss battle with Mendez. I thought it would be over once I got through the quick-button segment – man, was I wrong. That enemy design was fantastic. And the cabin shootout with Luis was also something great, like from *Dawn of the Dead*.

"IT'S THE KILLER APP WE'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR."

- PSM



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Five TOUGH RE4 moments ... and how to beat them

1. Your first battle with the El Gigante

First off, the nutjobs are released when you go down into the pit — so, whatever you do, don't kick down the ladder. Slash Ashley safely in a metal bin, jump down into the pit, and as soon as you hear the chainsaw, climb back up. Then, run back to the ladder where you first entered the area. Stand here, blast away from there, preferably with the shotgun.

5. Battle against the two Garradors and

mystery boss (Chapter 4-1)
You'll enter a room where there are two Garradors (the blind guys with the wolverine claws). Shoot just one of them from afar, to see if you can get it to attack singly. Hang around the pillars, and when the charges, see if you can get it to attack singly. Hang around the pillars, and when the charges, see if you can get it to attack singly. Hang

2. The cabin shootout with Luis

(Chapter 2-2)
First, push the bookcases in front of the windows. That done, the key here is mobility. Enemies will come from everywhere, and while Luis isn't half bad, he'll need you to help out. Kick the ladder, blast away with the shotgun, and reload any time you get a spare moment.

Once Luis calls you to head upstairs, the stairway is also a great bottleneck, where you can get lots of two-for-one shots.

3. Fight against two chainsaw-wild-ing crazies (Chapter 2-3)
This battle is tougher than most boss fights, believe it or not.

The Garradors are wickedly cool enemy, but two of them at once is more than anyone should have to handle.

It's all about patience. The dogs in this area are not roaming free. Rather, they are spawned when you activate certain, hidden triggers in the area. Thus, running around the maze is the quickest way to release so many dogs that you get overwhelmed.

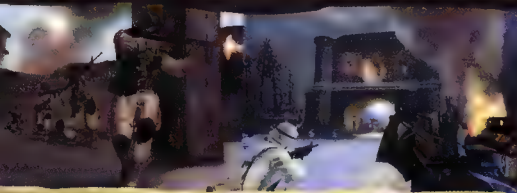
4. Hedge Maze (Chapter 3-2)

Soon after this, you'll go through a sequence when an alien-like boss is pursuing you around a small area, attacking through the ceiling. When you get to the elevator, try it, then try the door. The boss will turn up. Run past him and knock over the can of liquid nitrogen. It'll freeze him. Then, you can either run away (you don't actually have to kill this guy) and return later to use the elevator, or pull out something huge like a rocket launcher and blow him away to get the Crown Jewel.

Killing this treaky boss is optional, but oh-so-satisfying. Gets you a valuable item, too.



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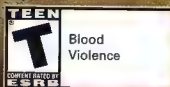
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Mission Debriefing

Producer Masachika Kawata, Capcom

Even as he prepared feverishly for Tokyo Game Show, Mr. Kawata was kind enough to chat about

Resident Evil 4 with us for awhile.

PSM: Of all the *RE4* enemies, we

have to say that the chainsaw-wield-

ing enemies with the sacks on their

heads are the most chilling to us.

How did their design come about?

The biggest impact we wanted was

to generate fear from a big creature

with a sack on its head, attacking a

player with the roar of a chainsaw.

Also the continuous sound of the

chainsaw's motor is frightening

especially because you can't always

see that enemy but you can hear

him. I'm definitely pleased with

how the enemy turned out.

PS4: Which is your favorite of the

RE4 enemies?

I like the lake monster, which is

a huge aquatic creature. In the

fight sequences, there are a lot of

spectacular elements which make

us feel like we're battling the Loch

Ness monster himself. I also like El

Gigante. That enemy is terrifying

and powerful and has a strong

impact.

PSM: We understand there are some

new weapons and costumes in the

PlayStation 2 version — could you

please tell us how they came about?

For the P.R.T. 412, it was created

because we wanted a stylish weapon

with strong impact. It can attack

only parasitic creatures and cannot

cause physical damage. It can defeat

the Ganado (villagers) or El Gigante,

but it can't be used on small chick-

ens or cows. It also can't be used to

destroy boxes or other stationary

items. This futuristic-looking weap-

on has a very specific purpose which

is to eradicate parasites.

For the costumes, the ones we

chose may not necessarily fit

within the universe of the

game. For Leon, we created his

outfit based on our image

of him using his "Chicago

gangster-era machine

gun). His costume suits

his stylish action pose

when shooting this

machine gun to his

heart's content. As for

Ashley, her costume

has been designed to

be "heavier" so that it

is harder for enemies

to abduct her when

she is alone. Also, it

does not sustain dam-

age from bullets no-

matter how much Leon

shoots her. They are just

additional costumes that

aren't really meant to be

taken seriously. Rather

they are just meant to

reflect a unique design.

PSM: Are there any elements

that you wish you could

have had more time to

develop?

It would have been nice to

focus on Luis and Krauser a

bit more.

PSM: What's next for you? A

vacation, we hope?

I am starting work on *Resident Evil 5*

and I think the pressure will be even

bigger for that. I am also planning

another project. It would be nice to

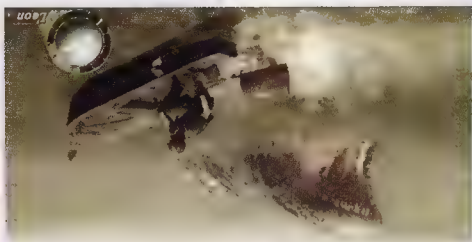
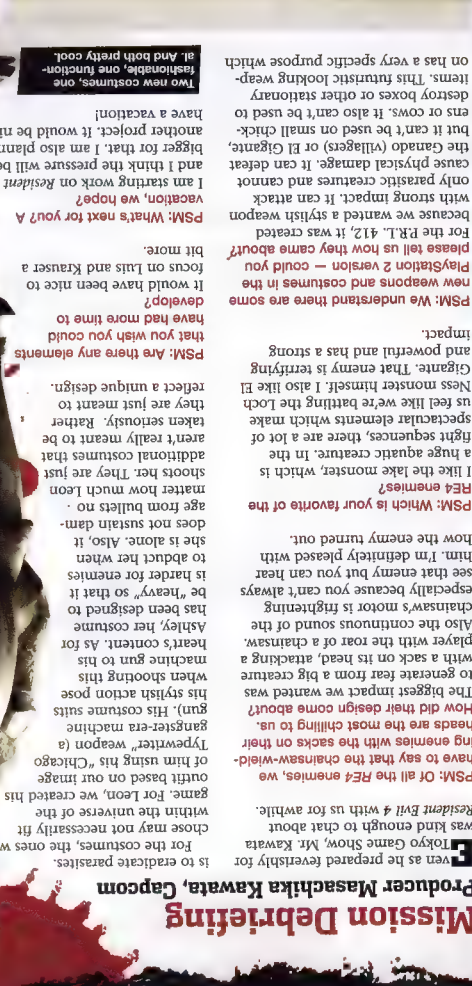
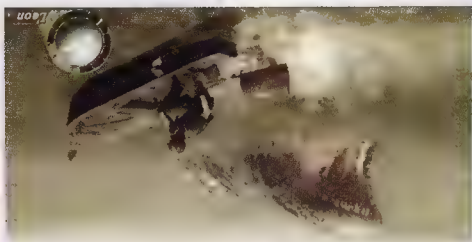
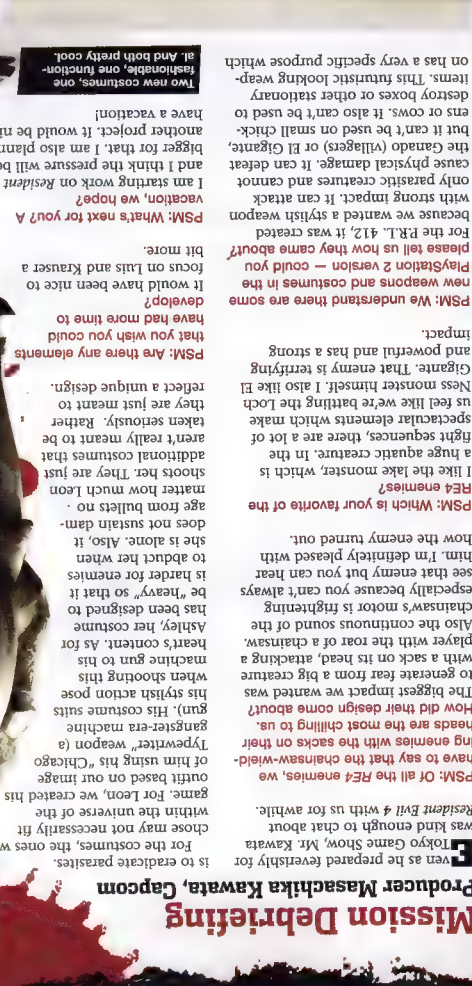
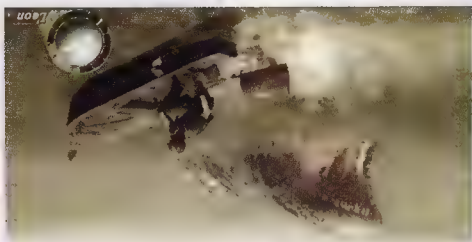
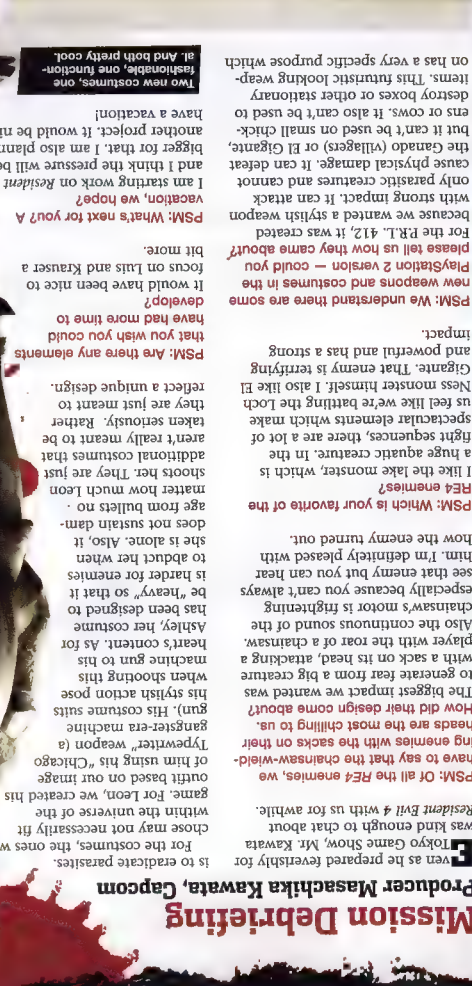
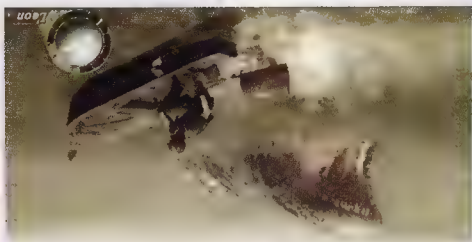
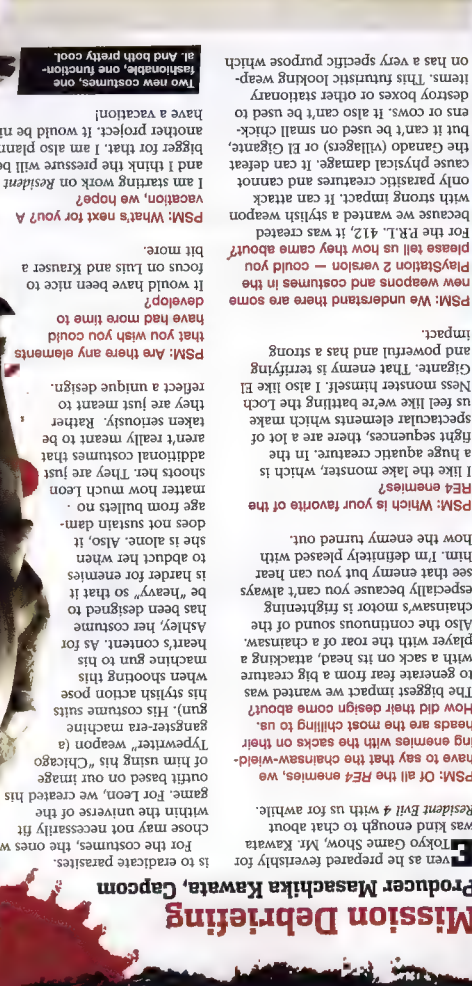
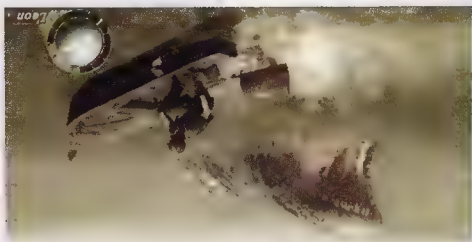
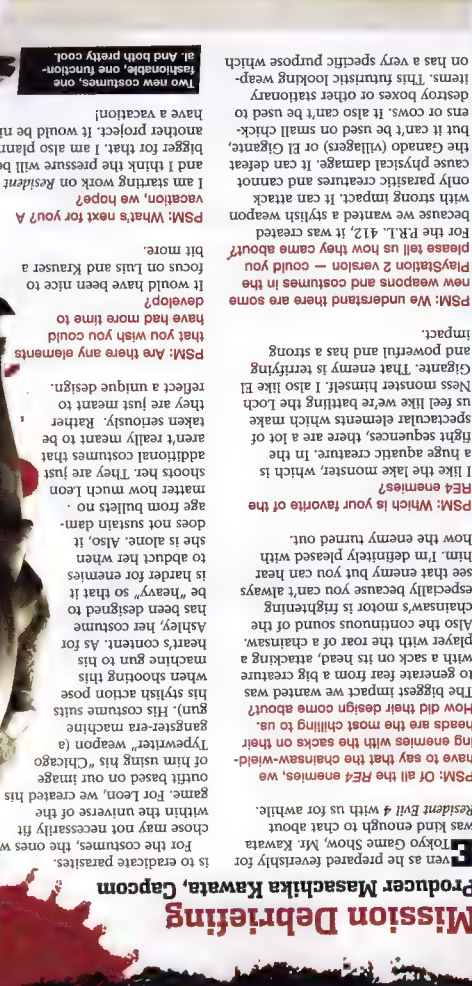
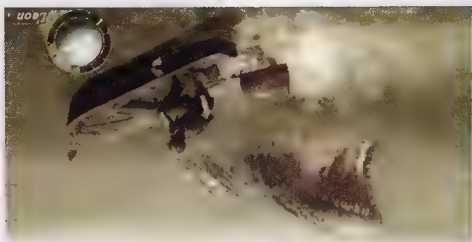
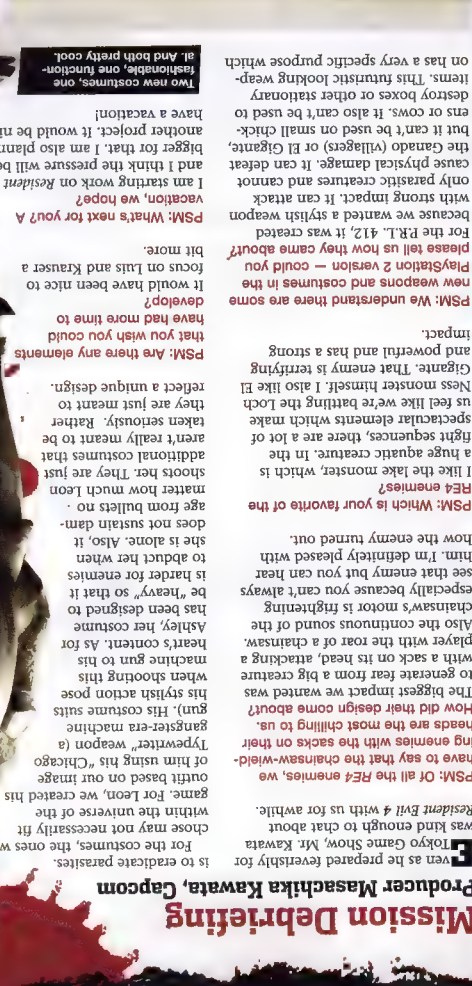
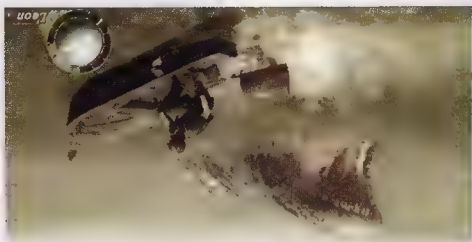
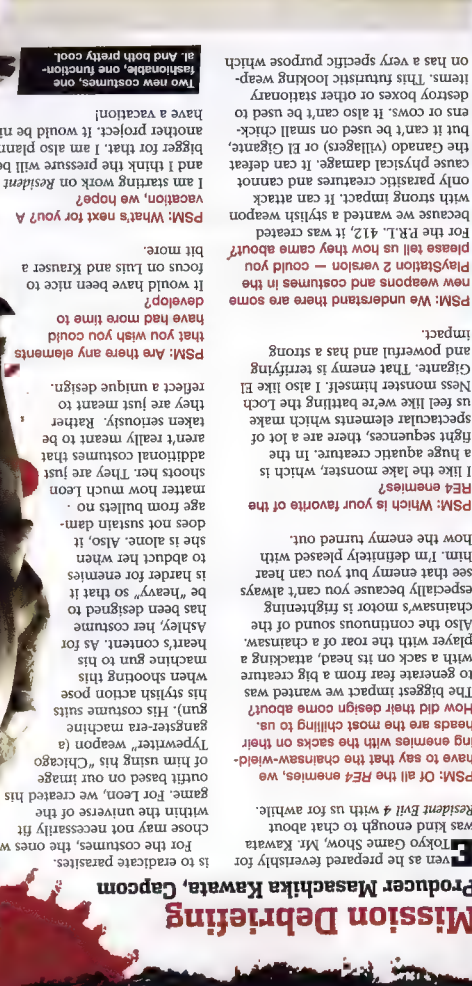
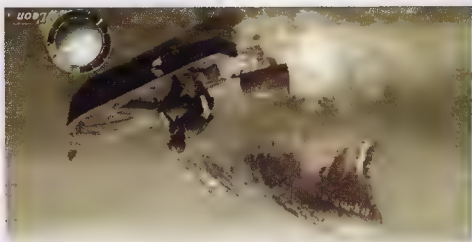
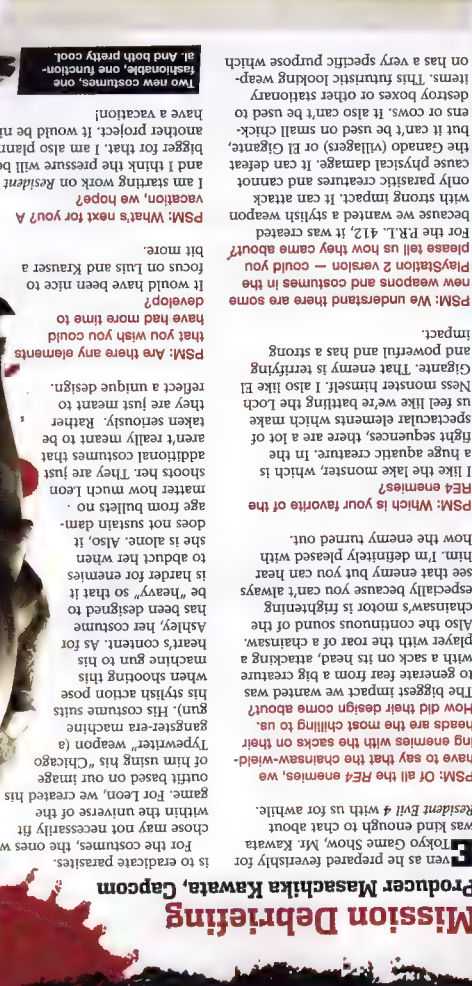
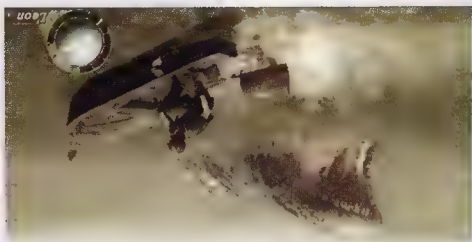
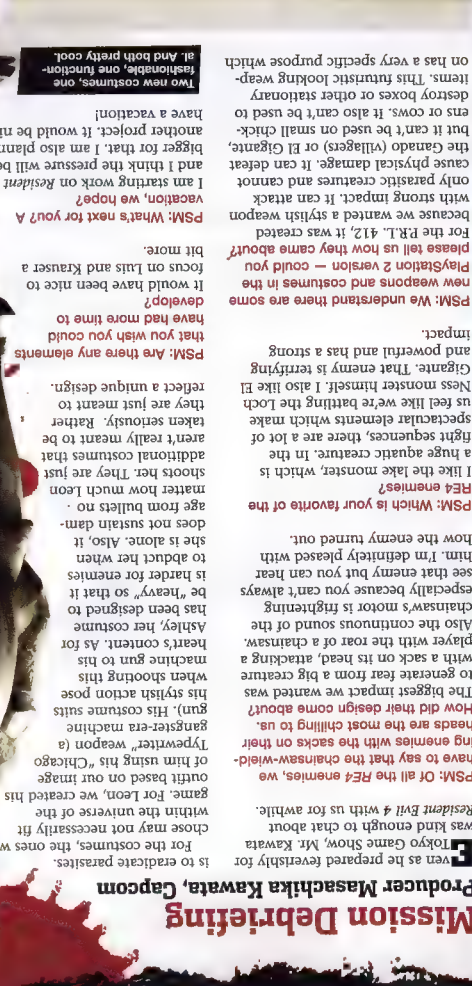
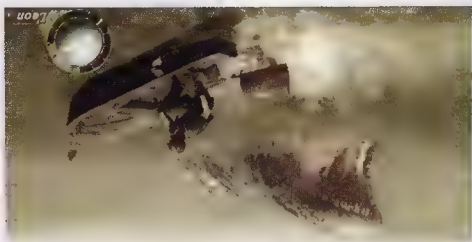
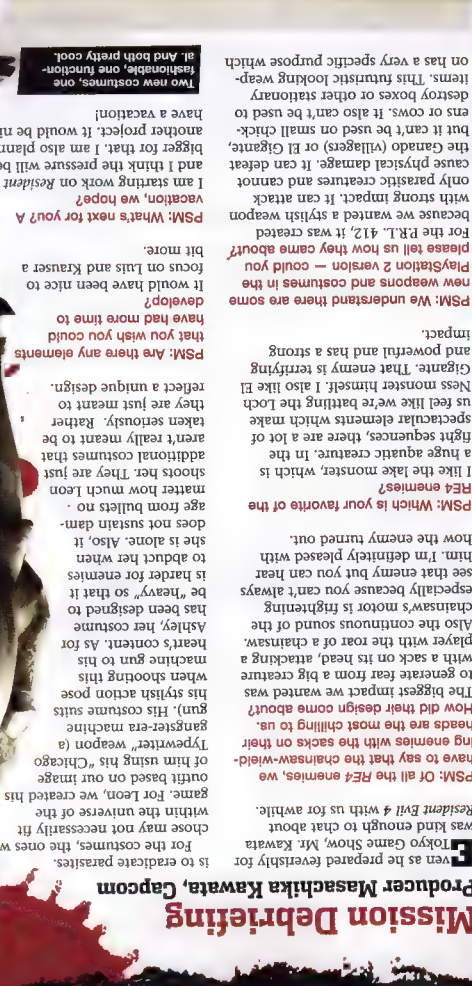
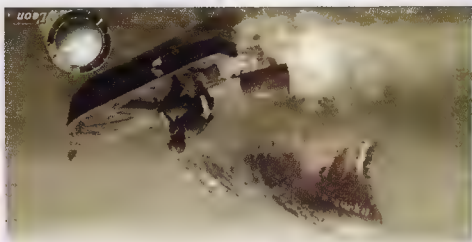
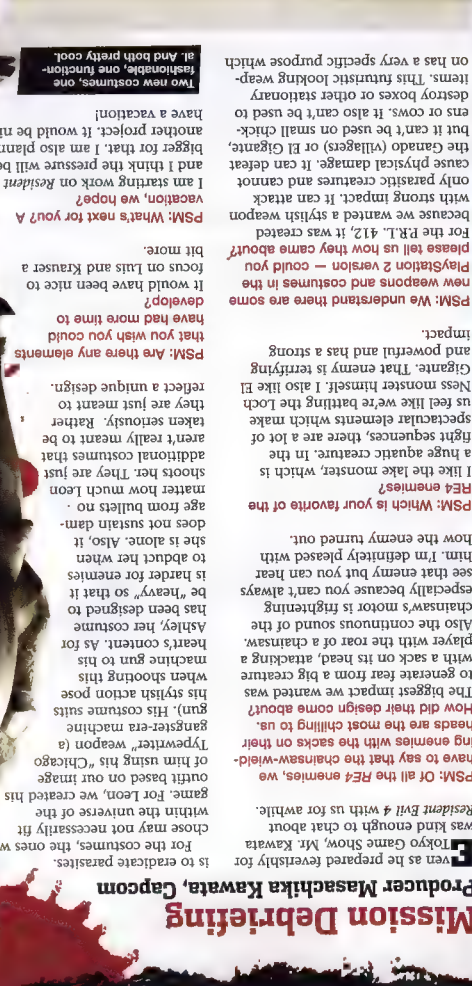
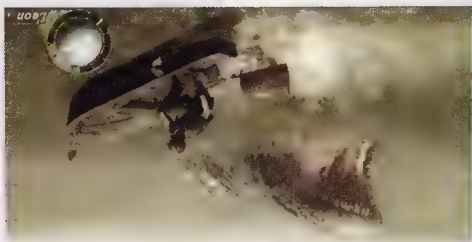
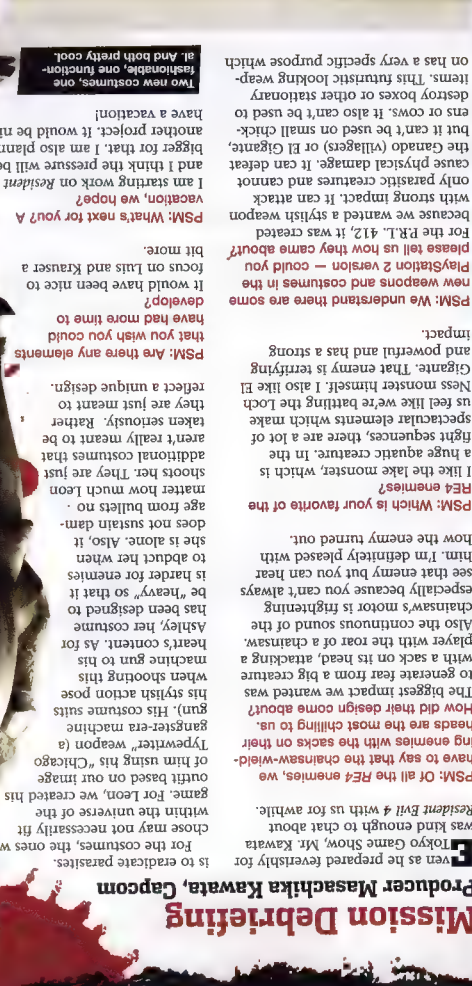
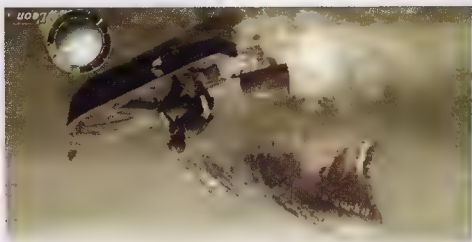
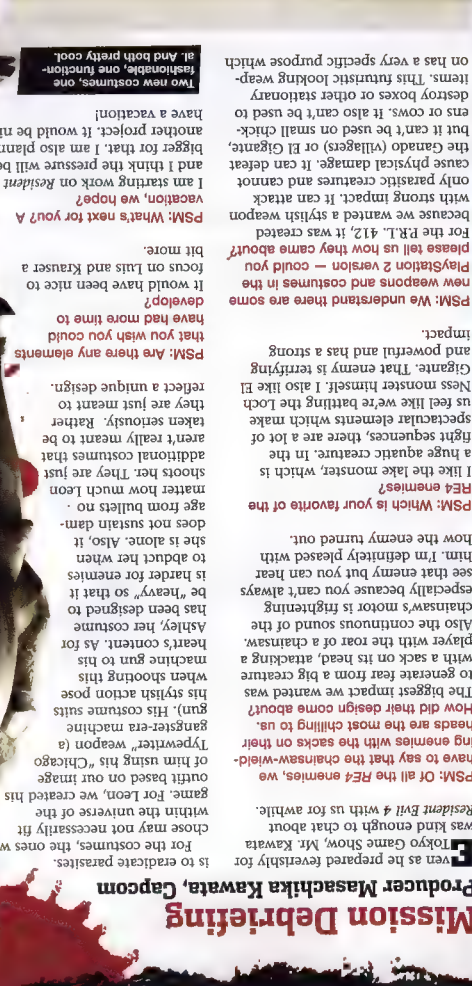
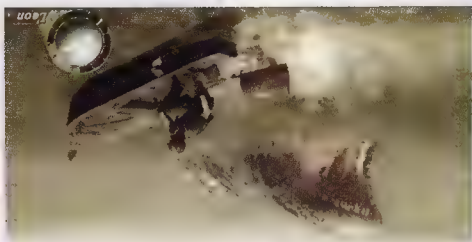
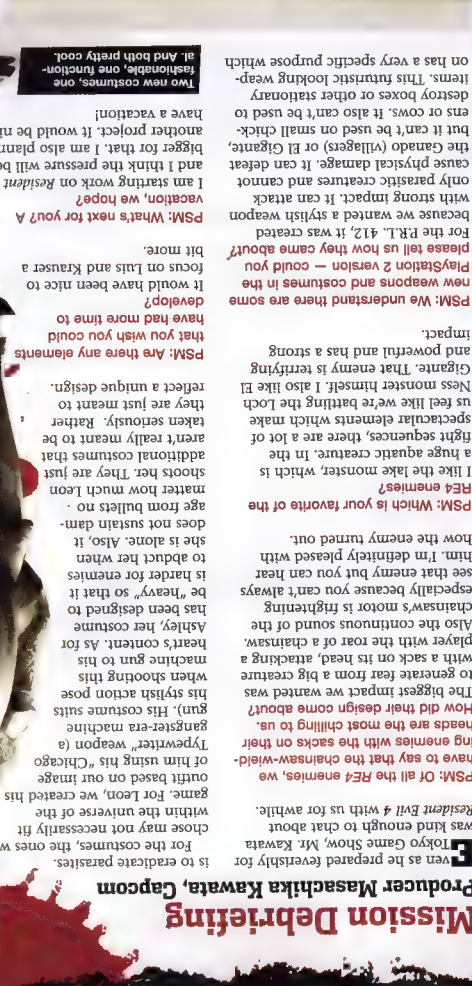
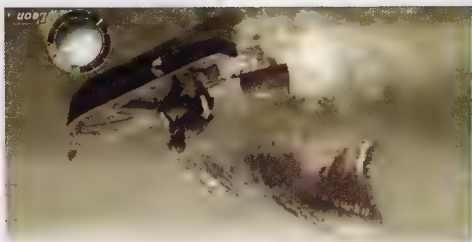
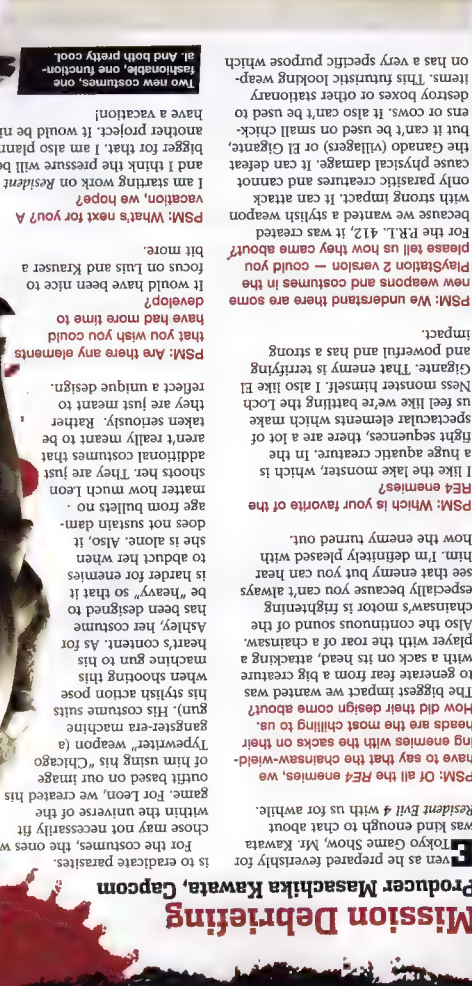
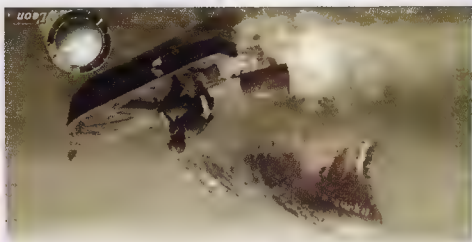
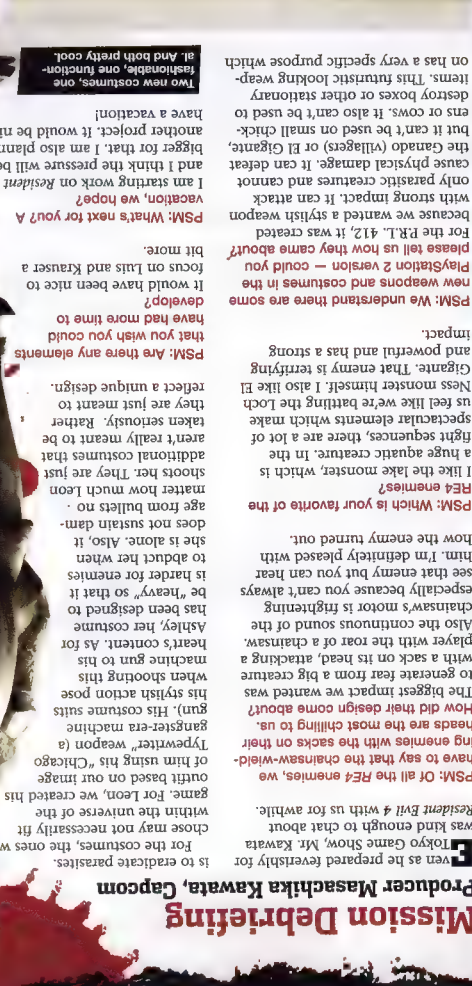
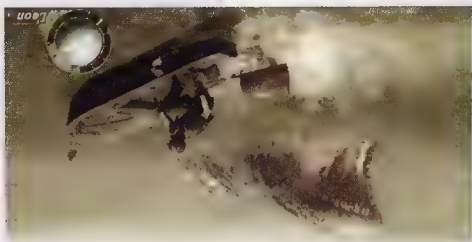
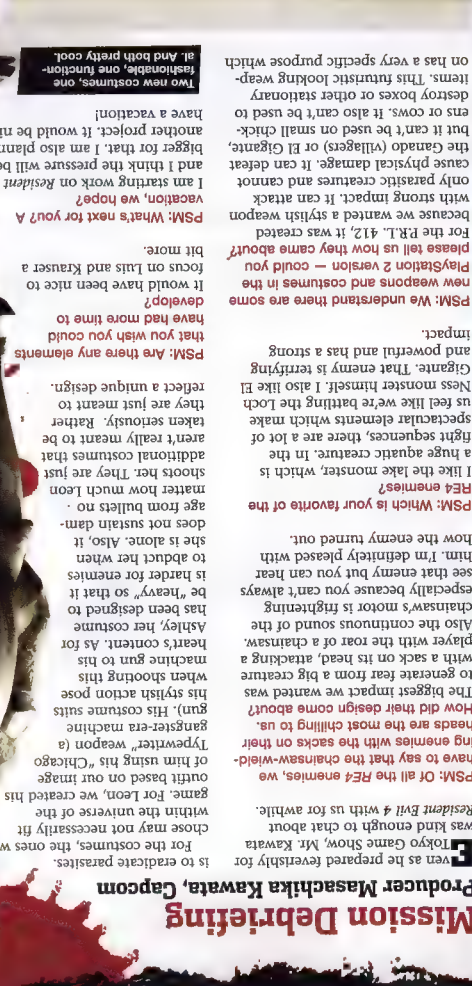
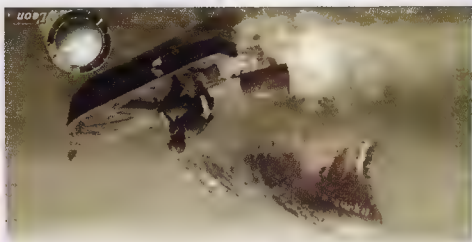
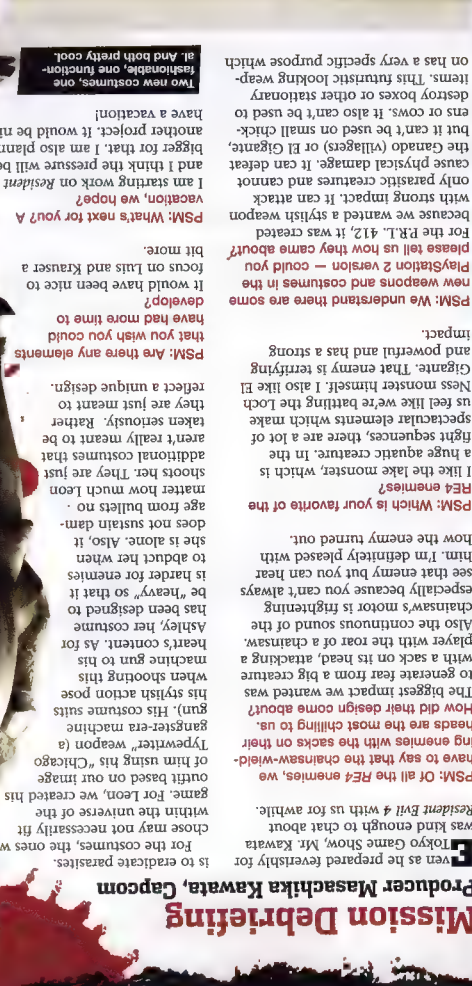
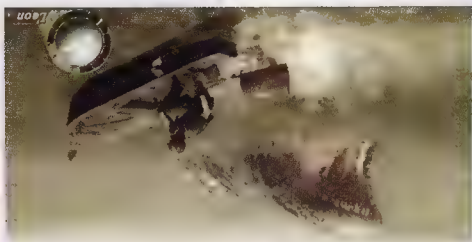
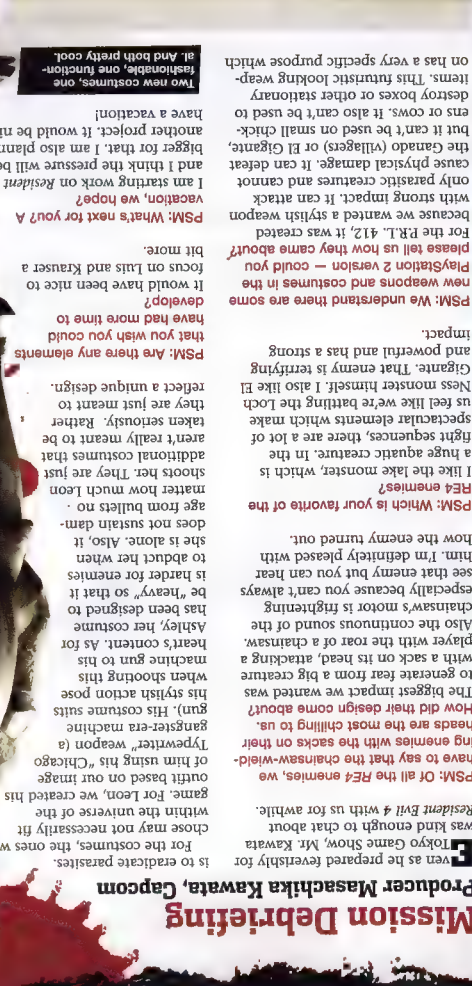
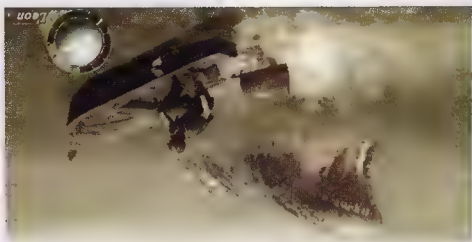
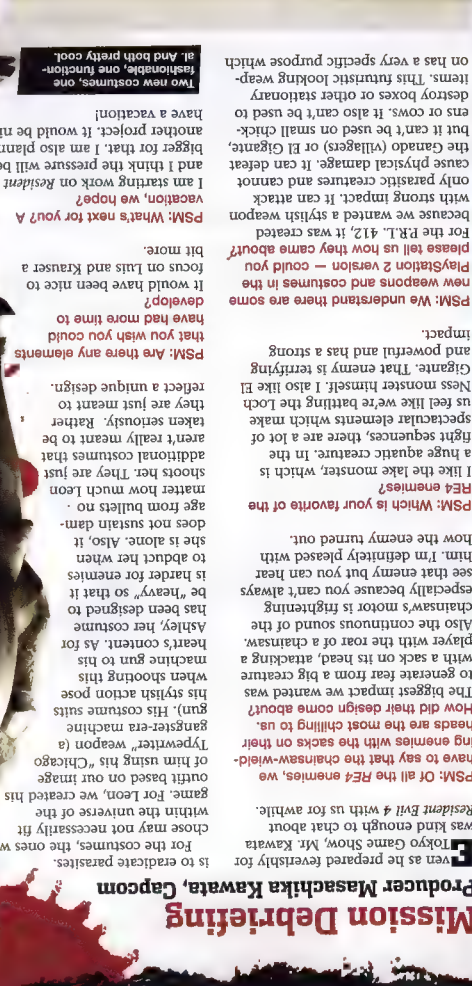
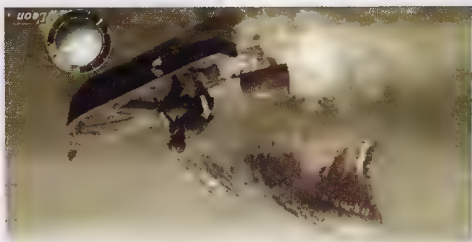
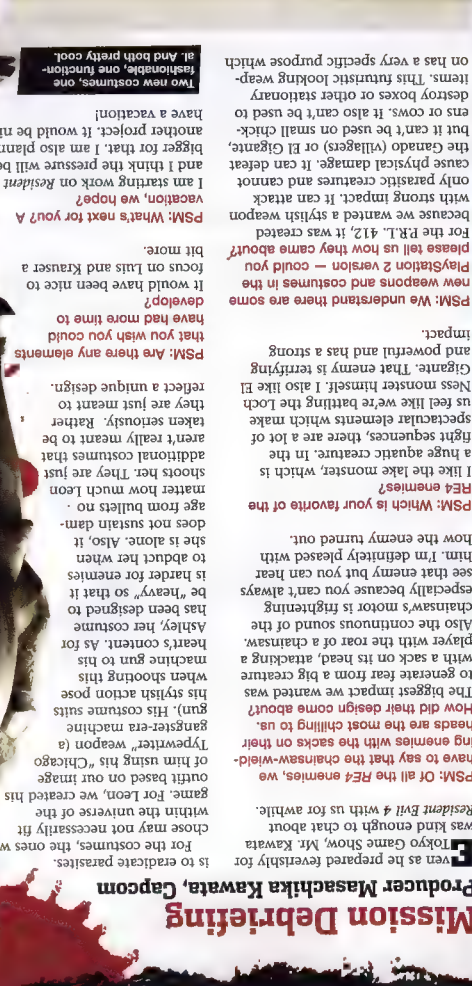
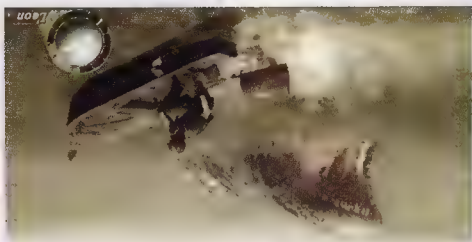
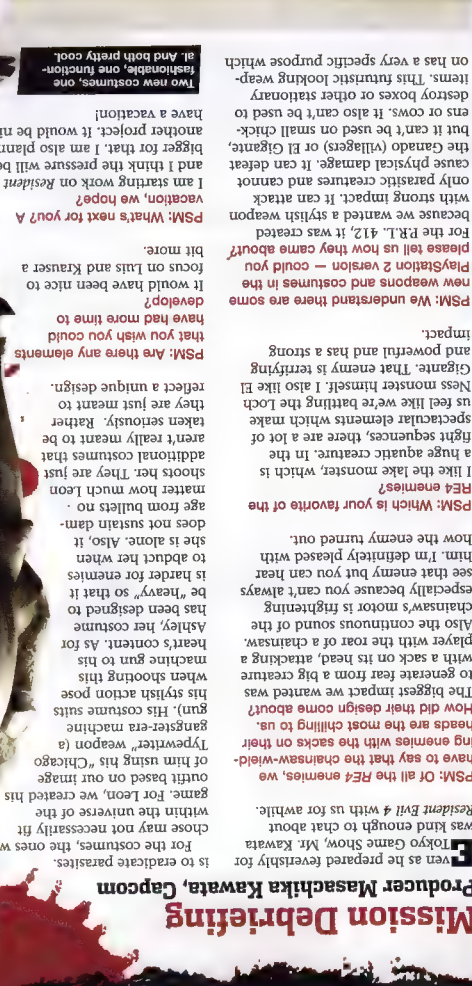
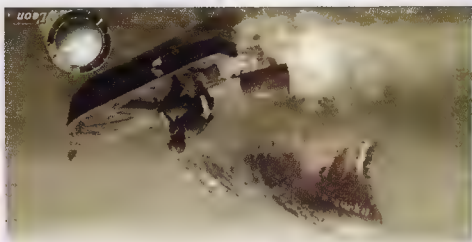
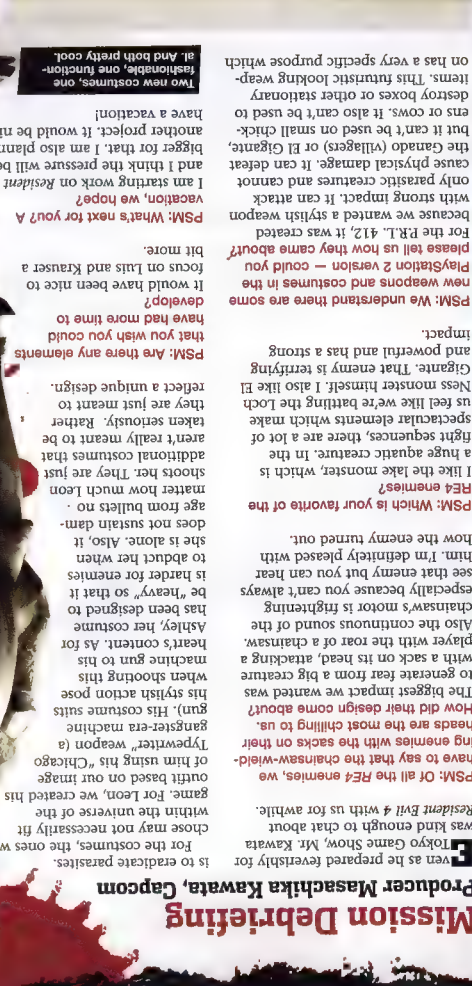
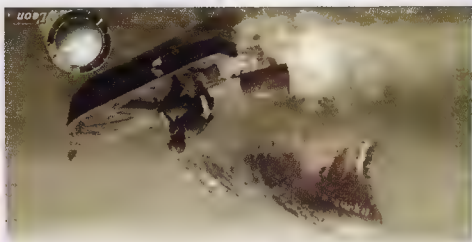
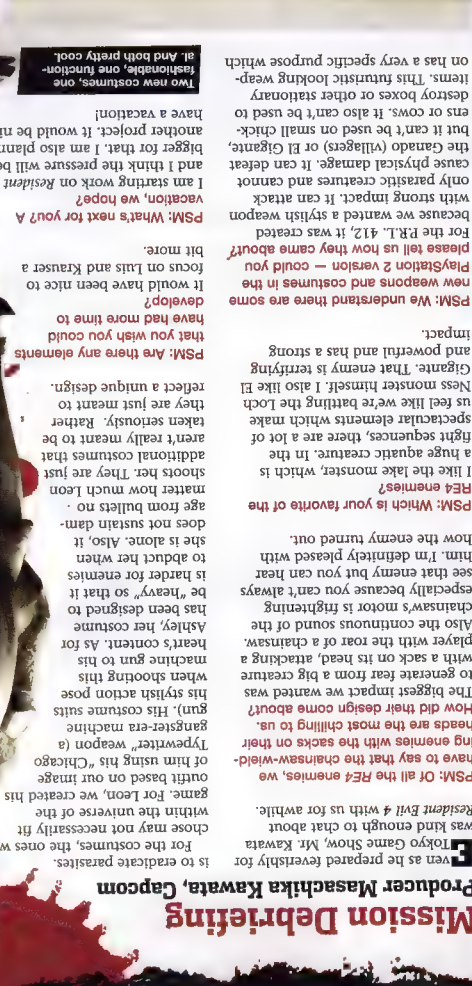
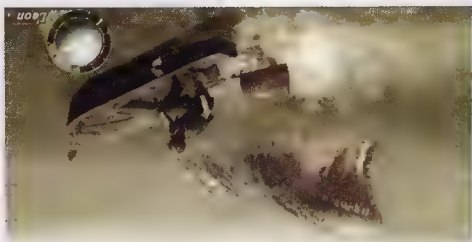
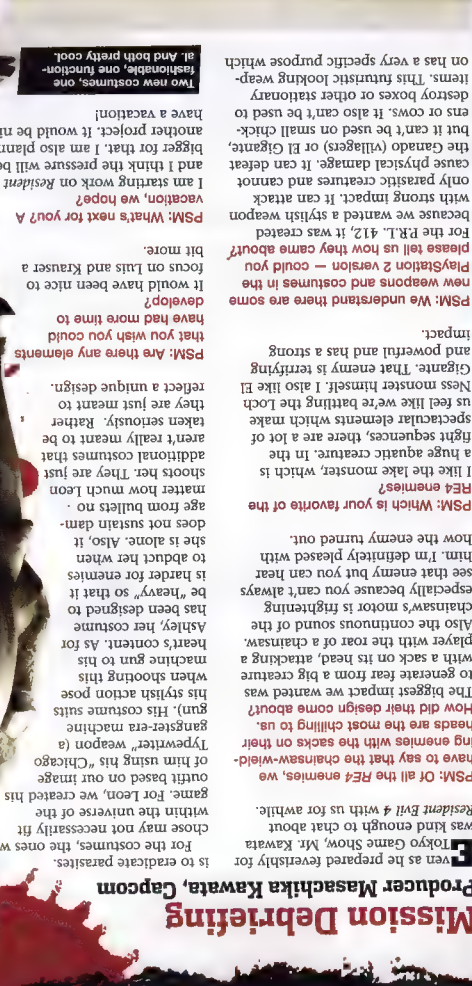
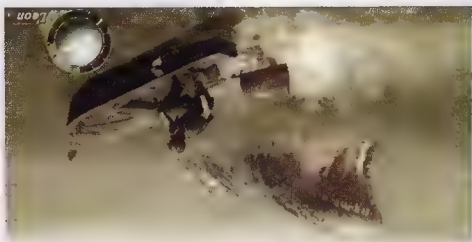
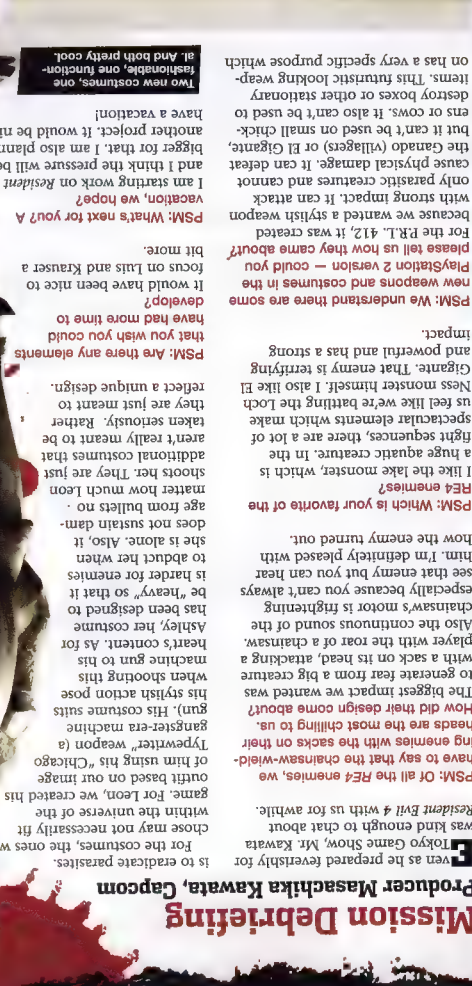
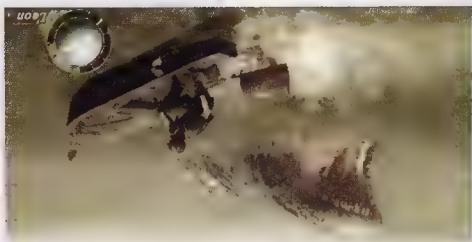
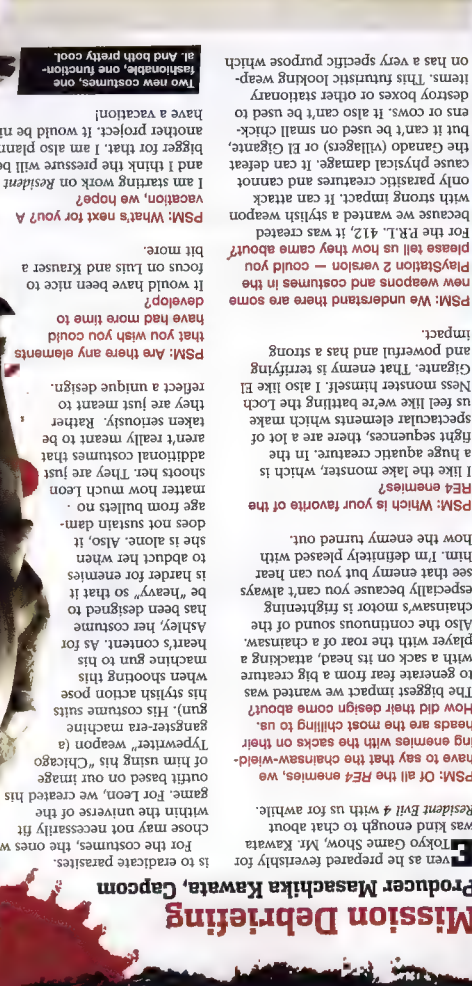
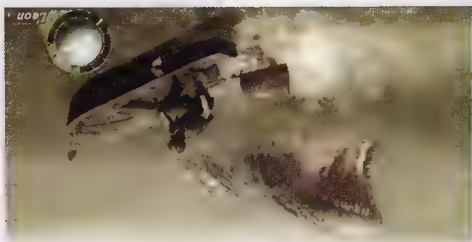
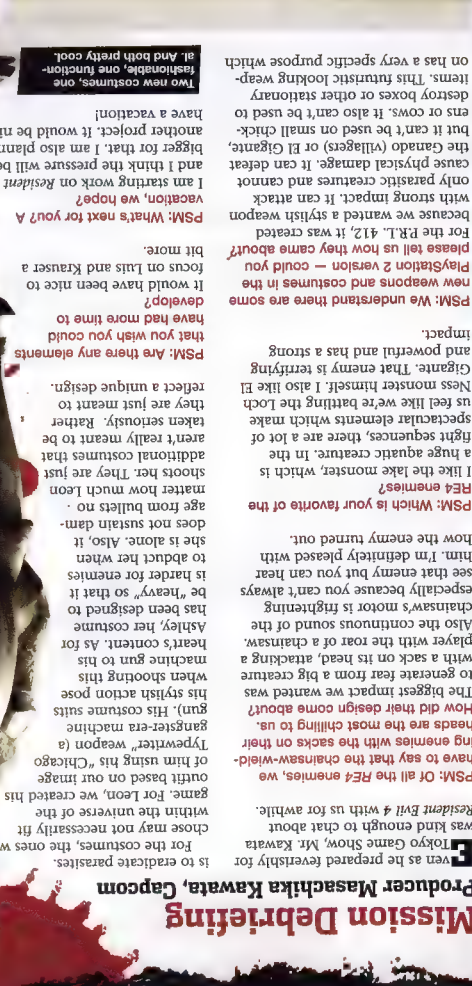
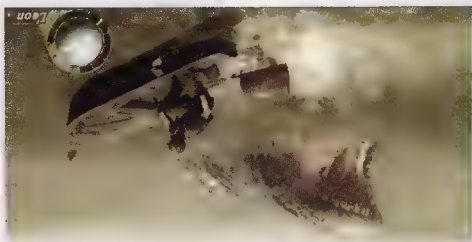
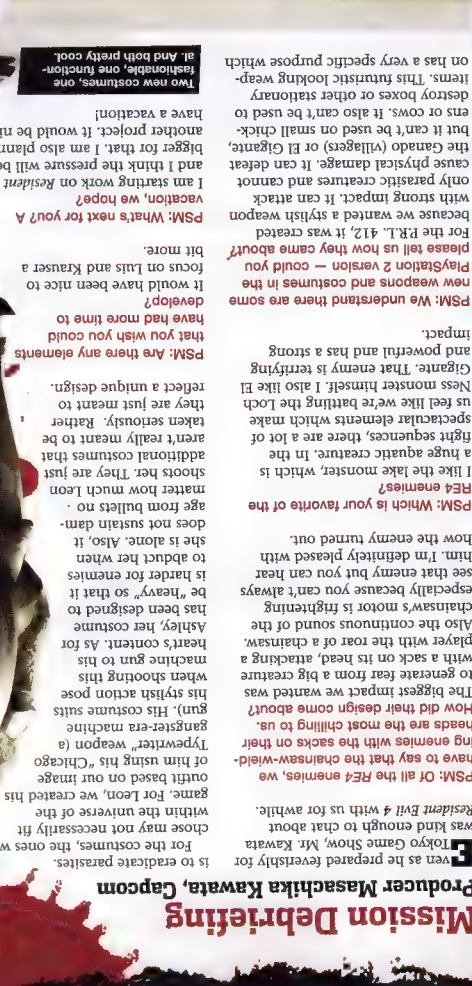
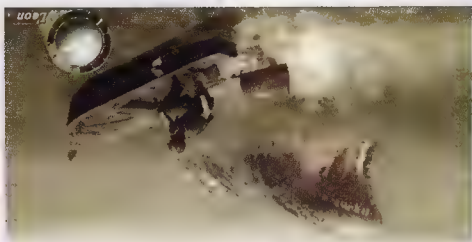
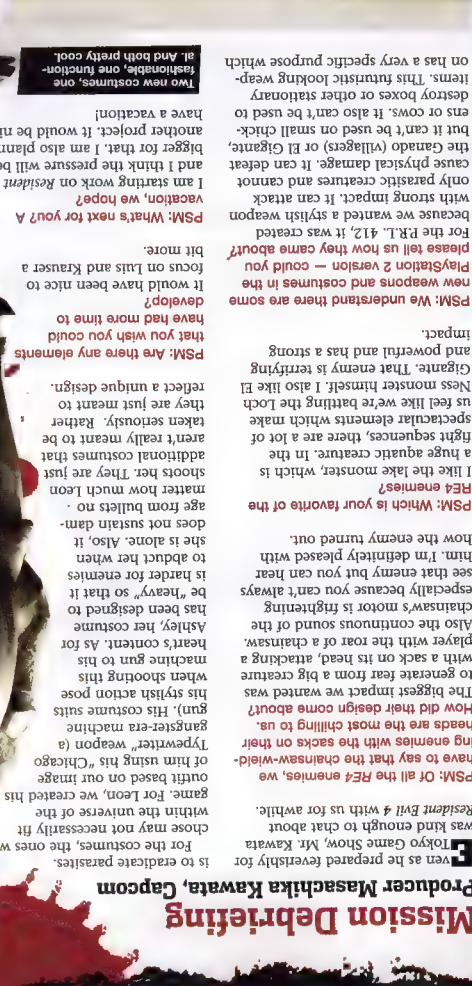
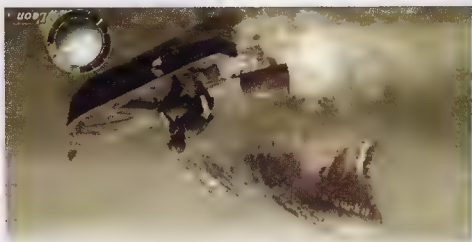
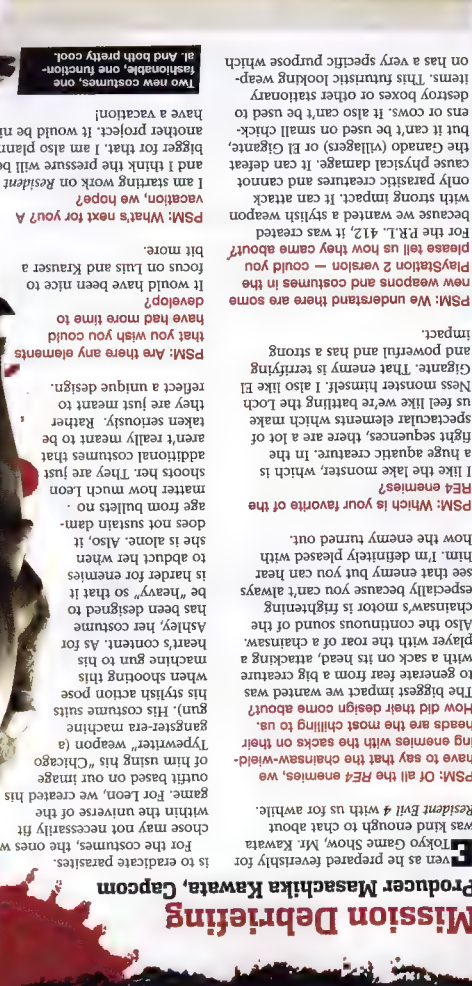
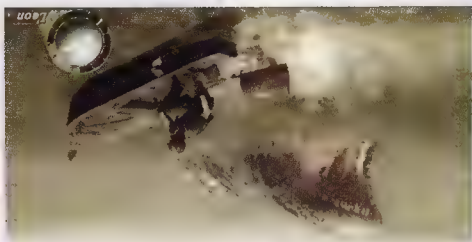
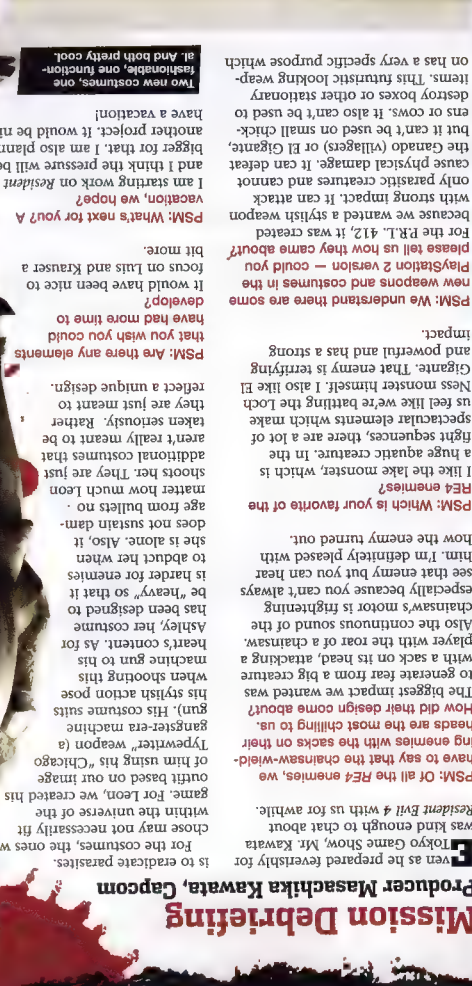
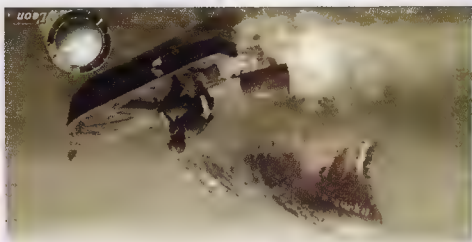
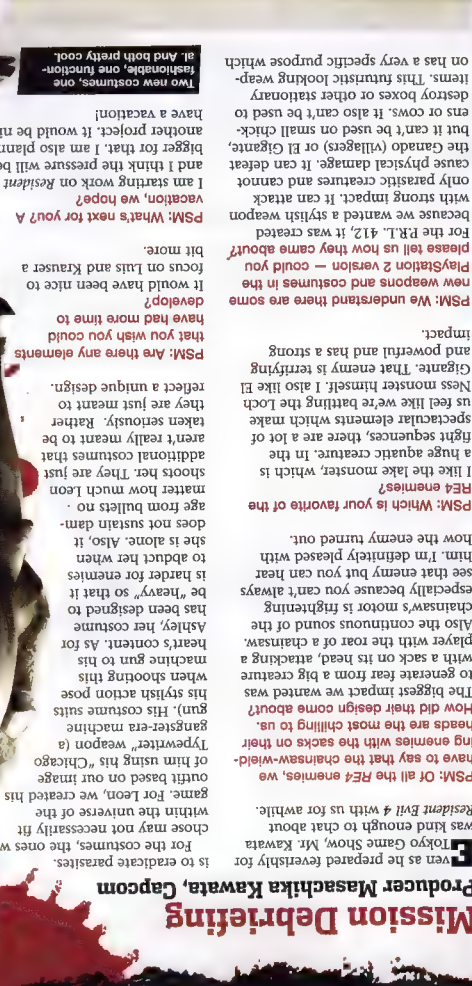
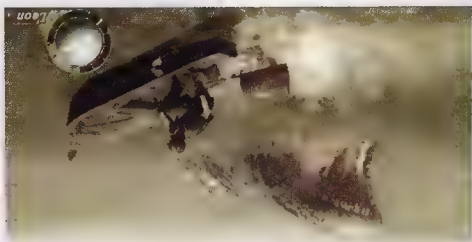
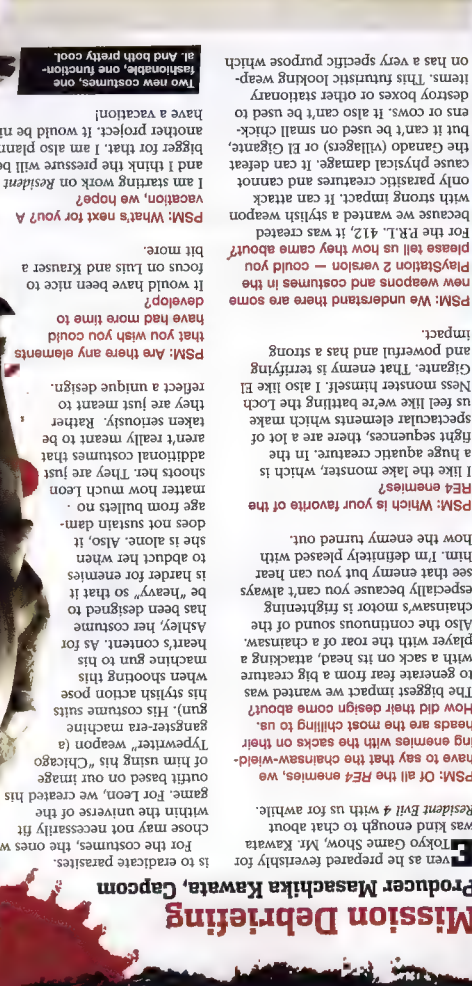
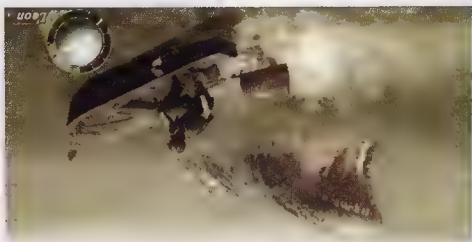
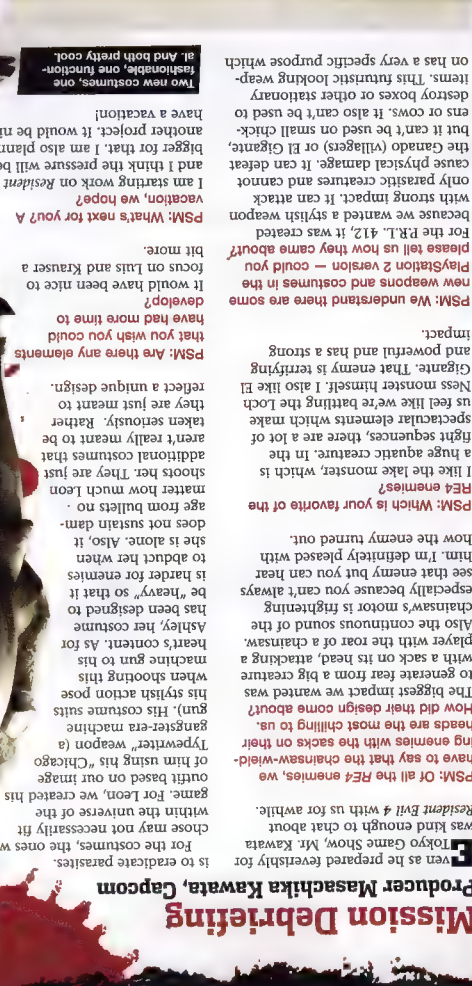
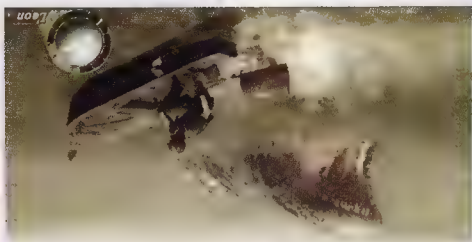
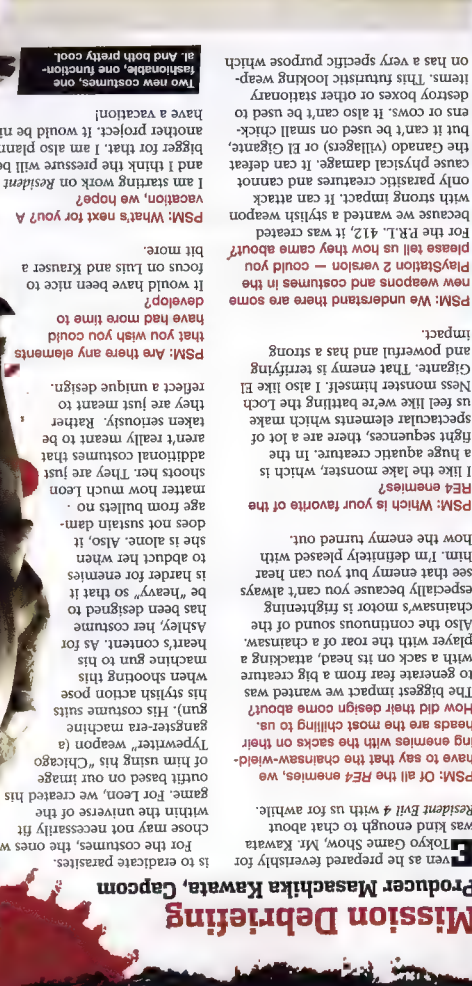
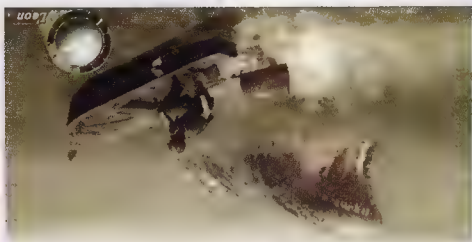
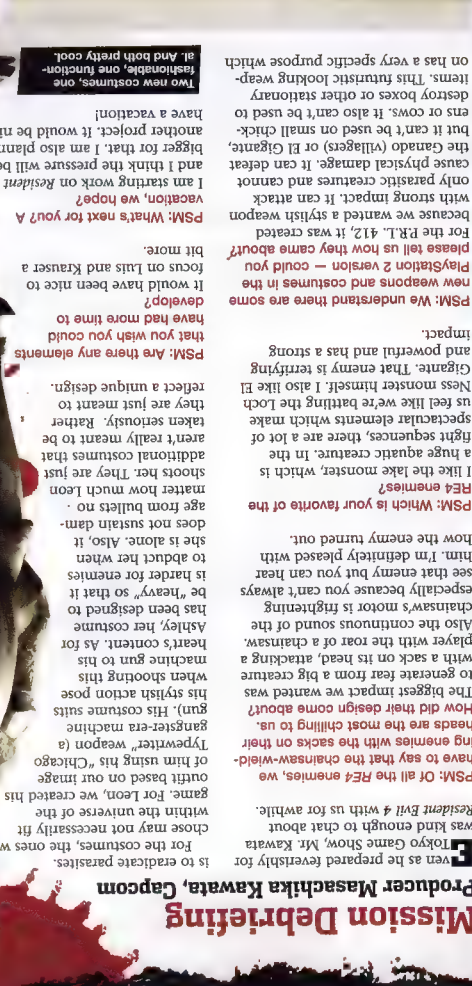
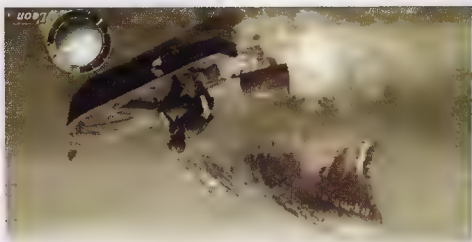
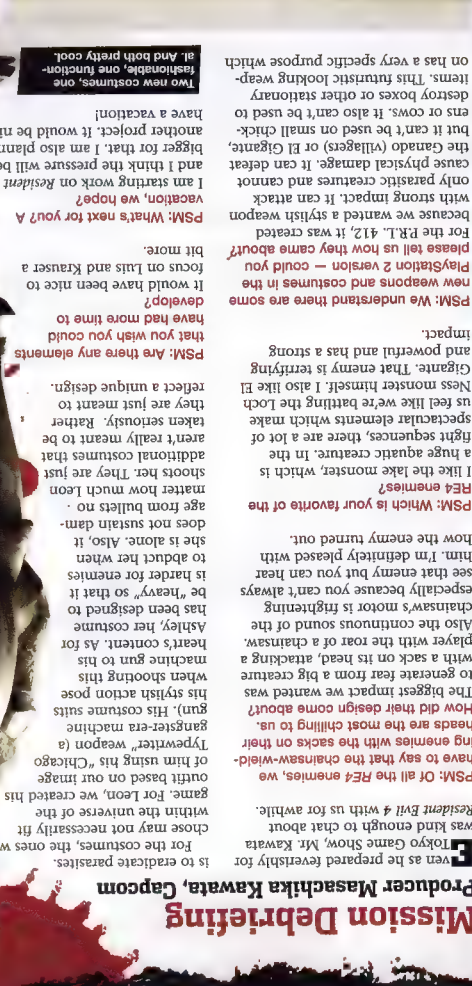
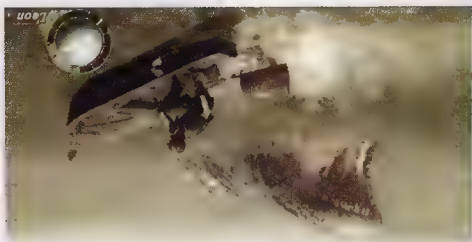
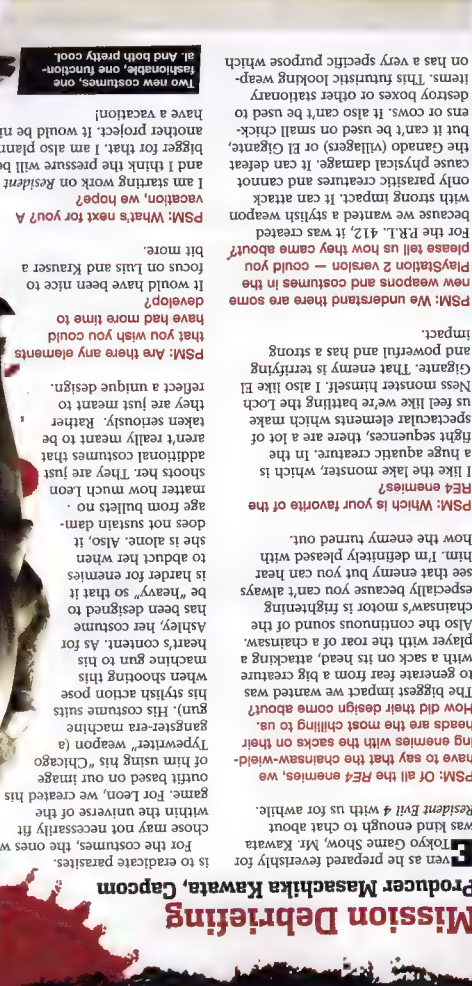
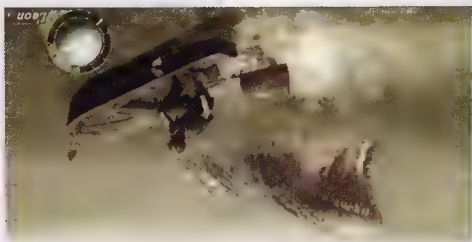
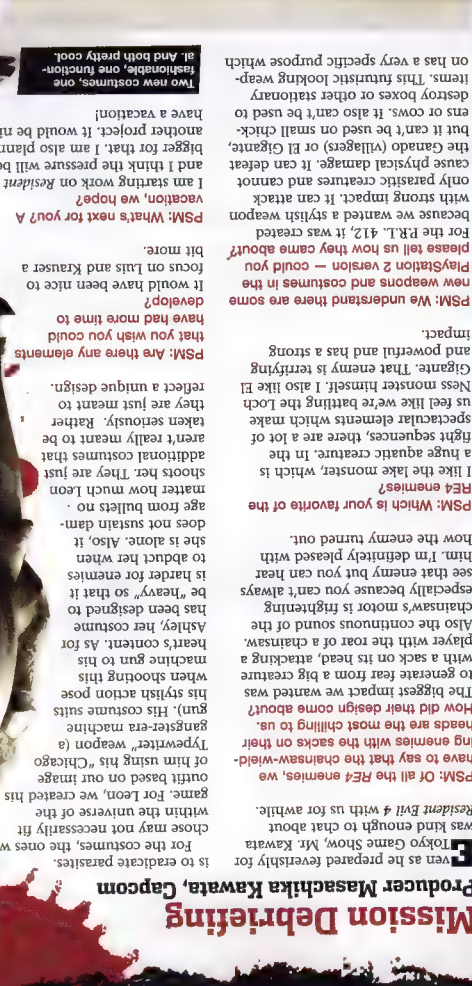
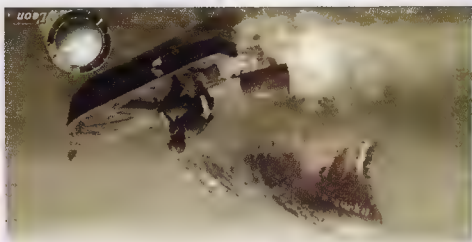
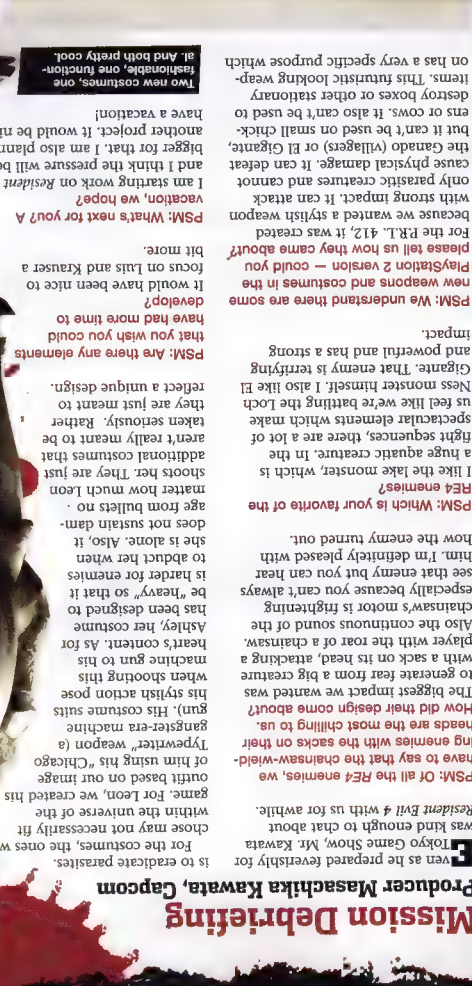
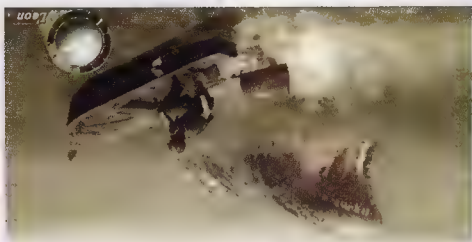
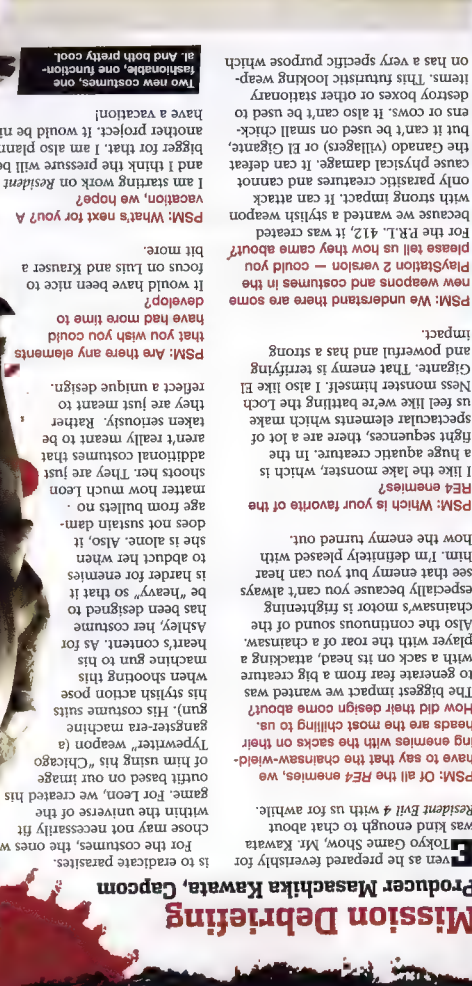
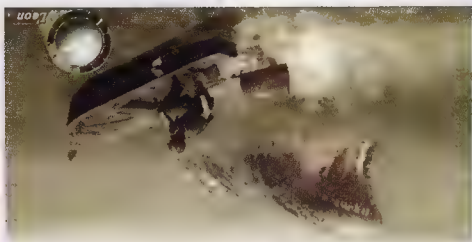
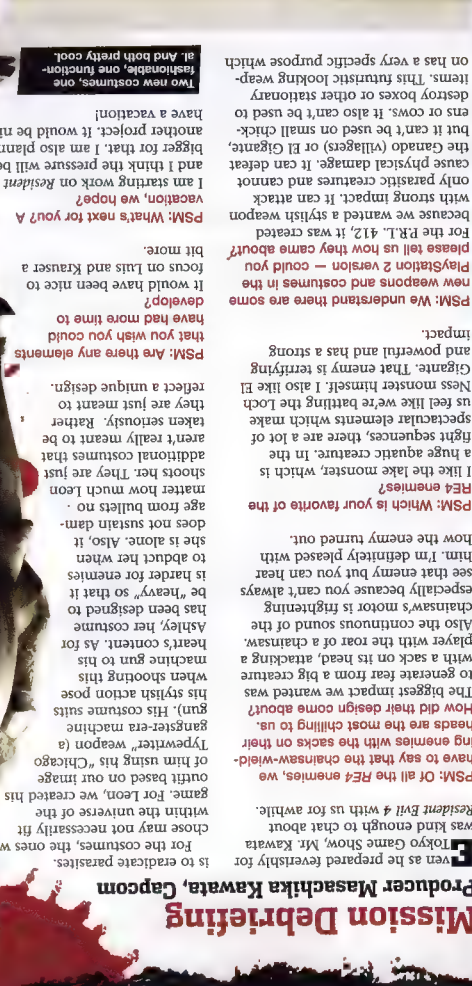
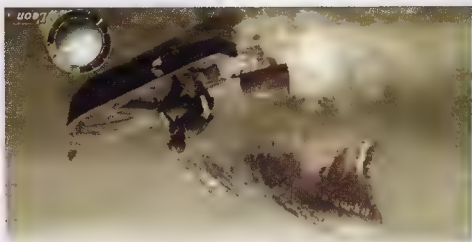
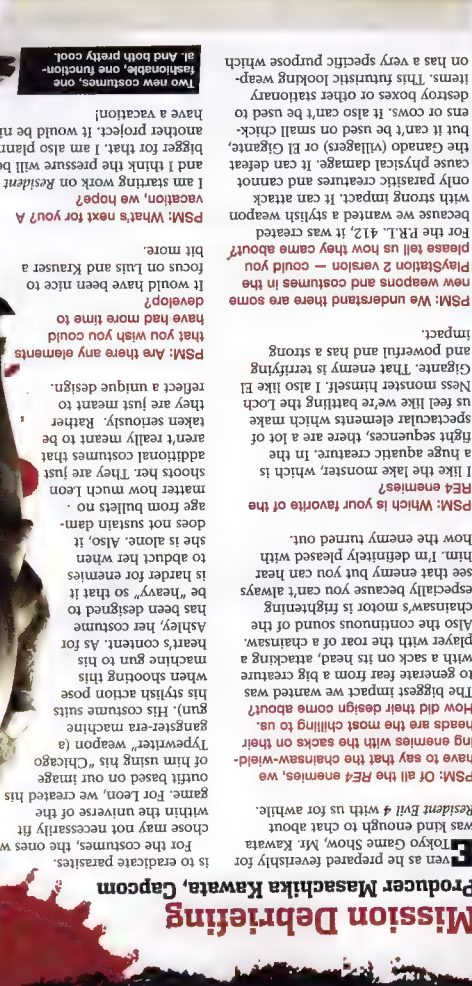
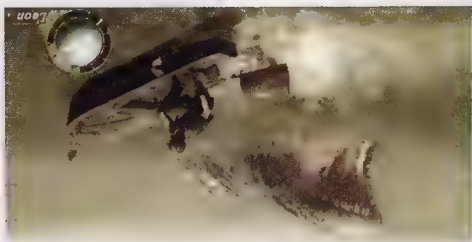
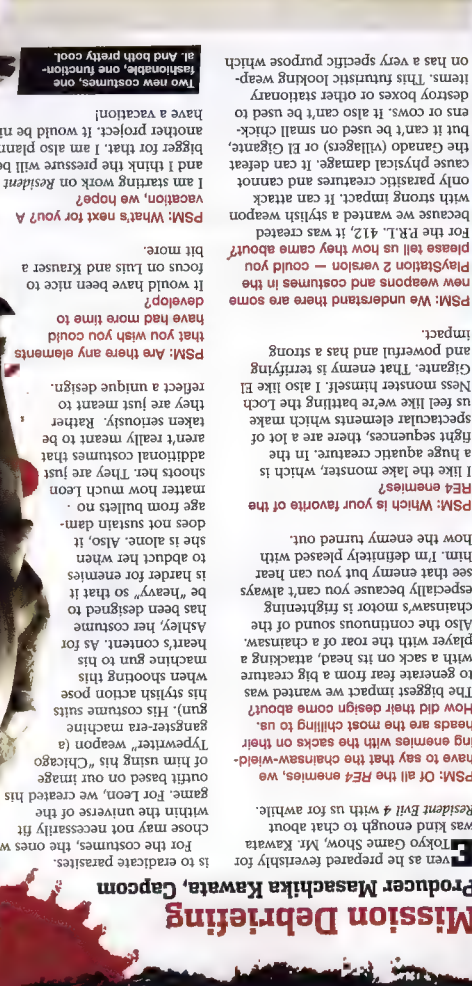
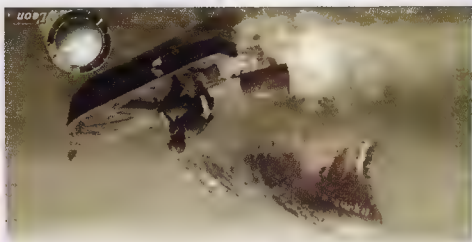
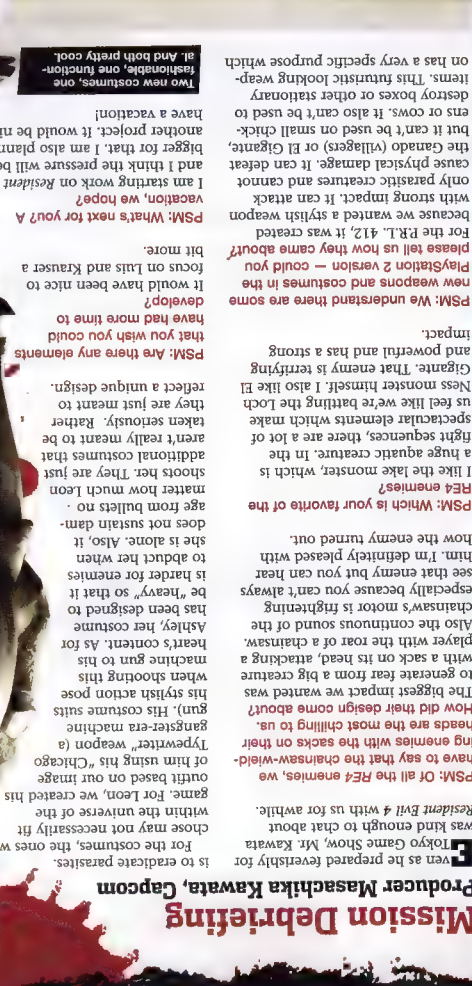
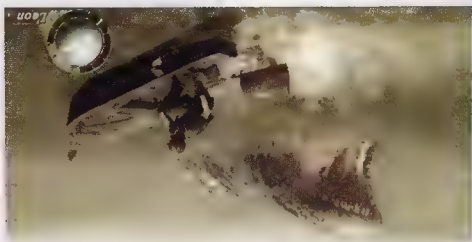
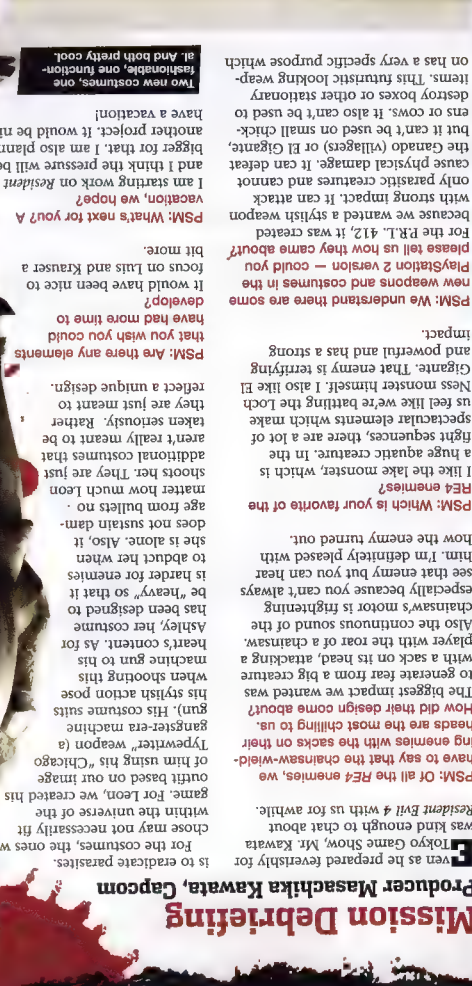
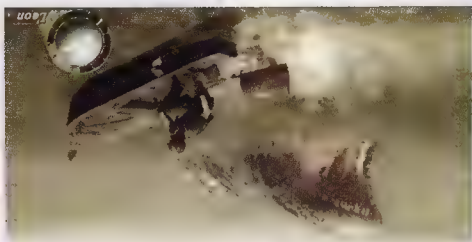
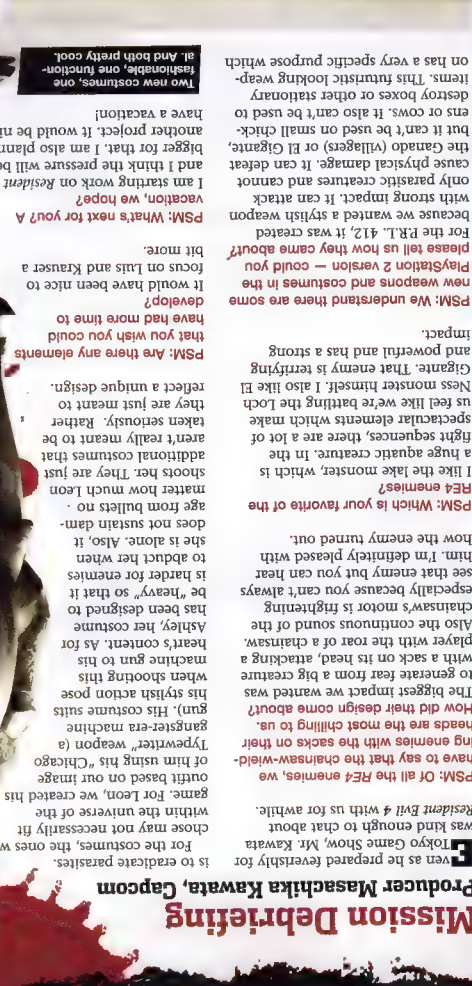
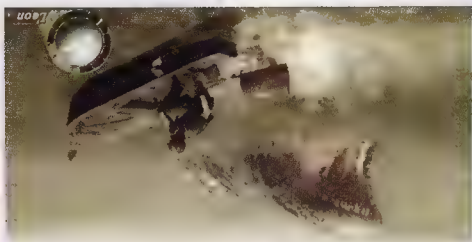
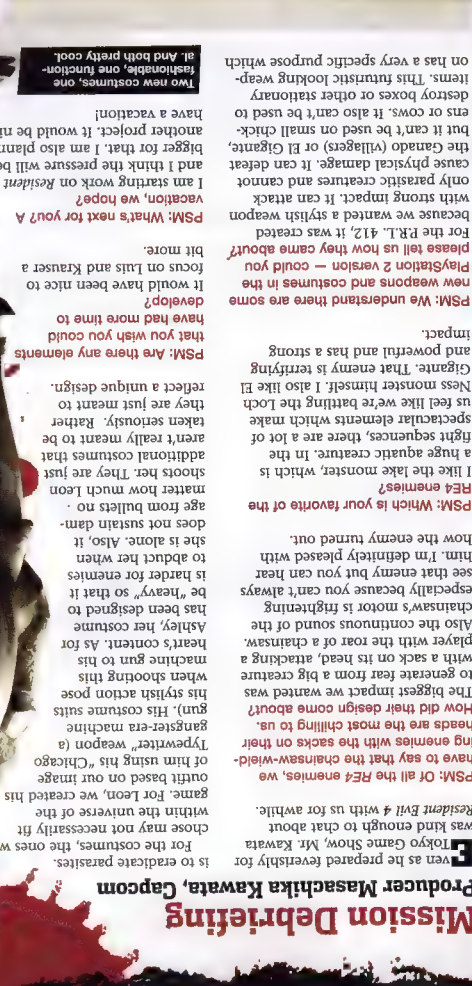
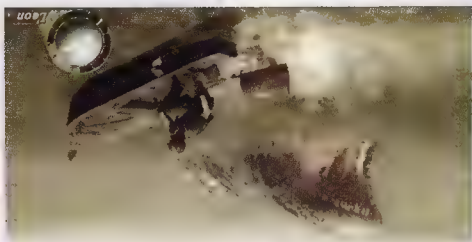
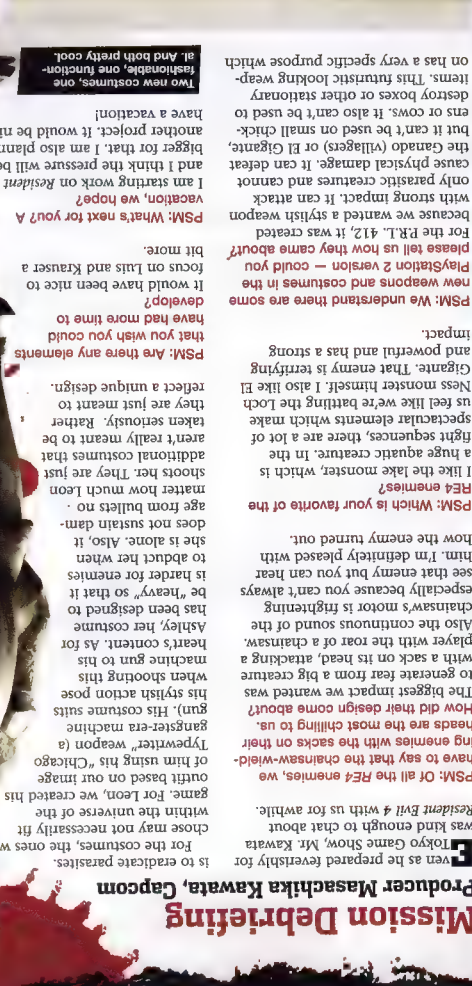
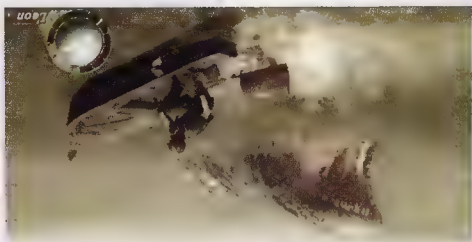
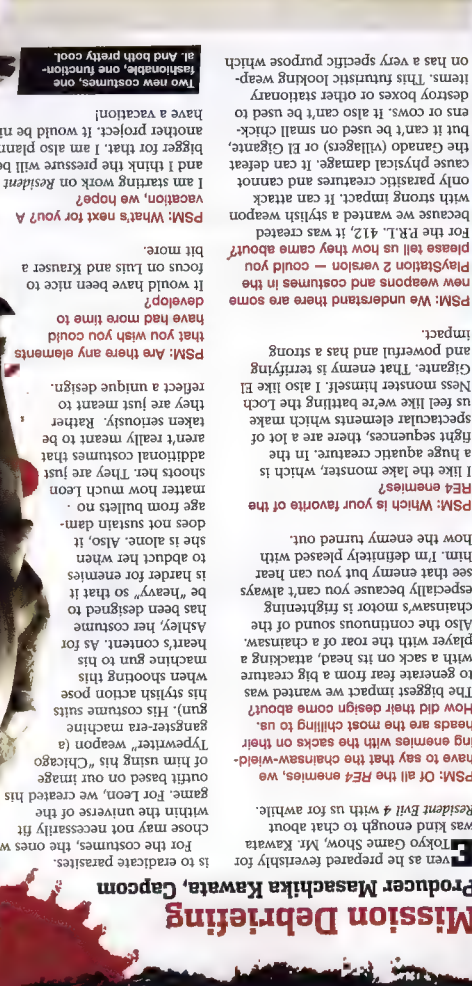
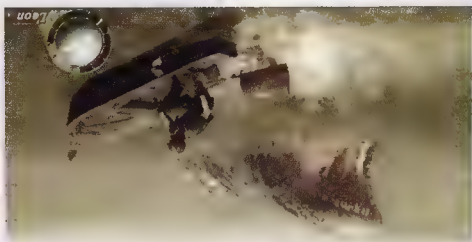
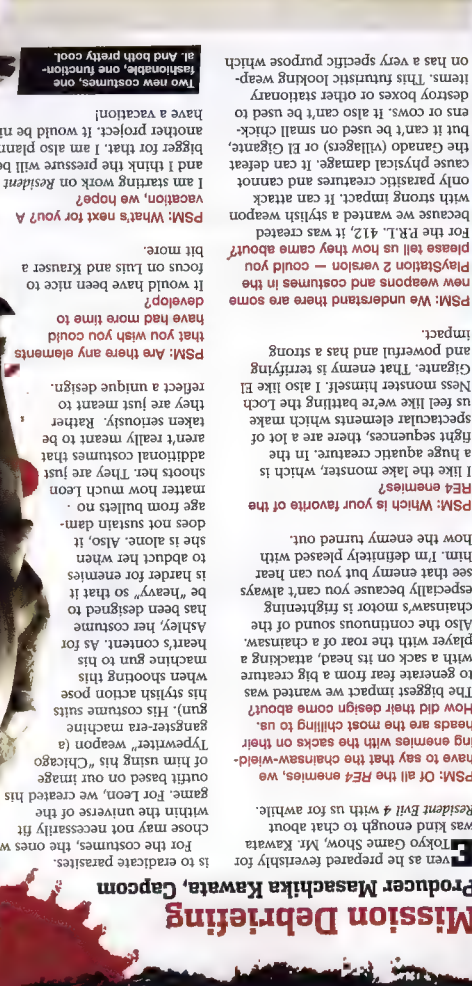
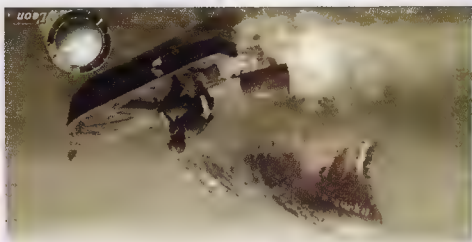
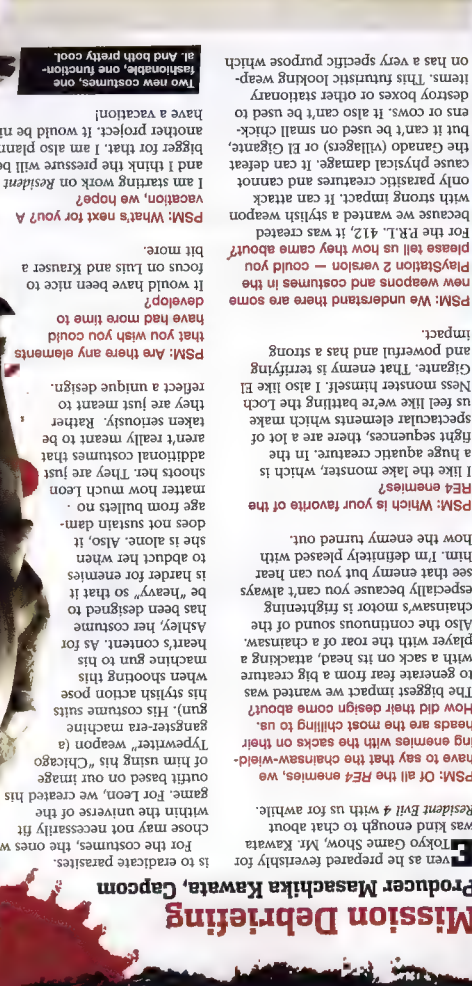
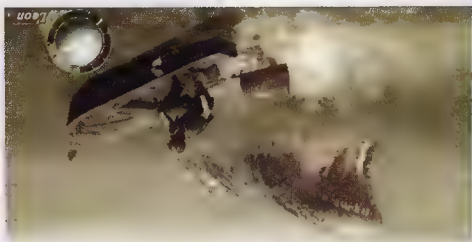
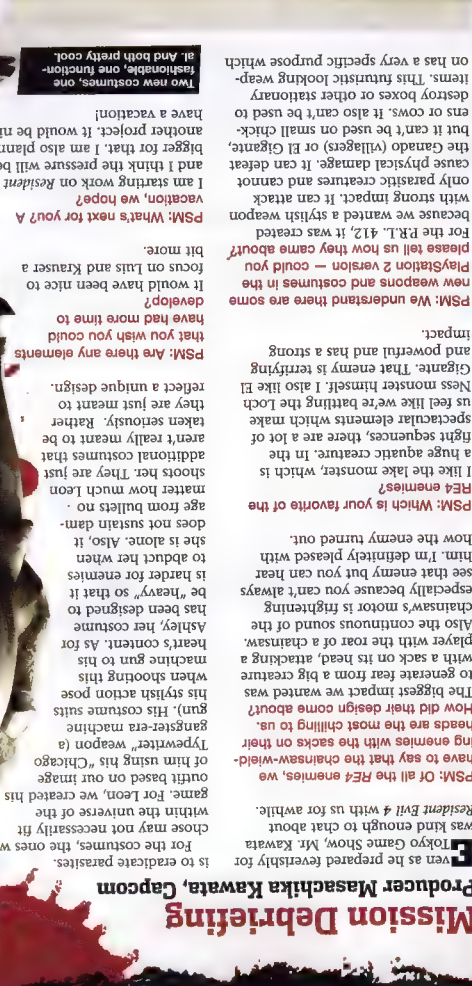
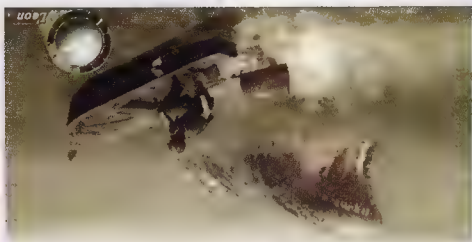
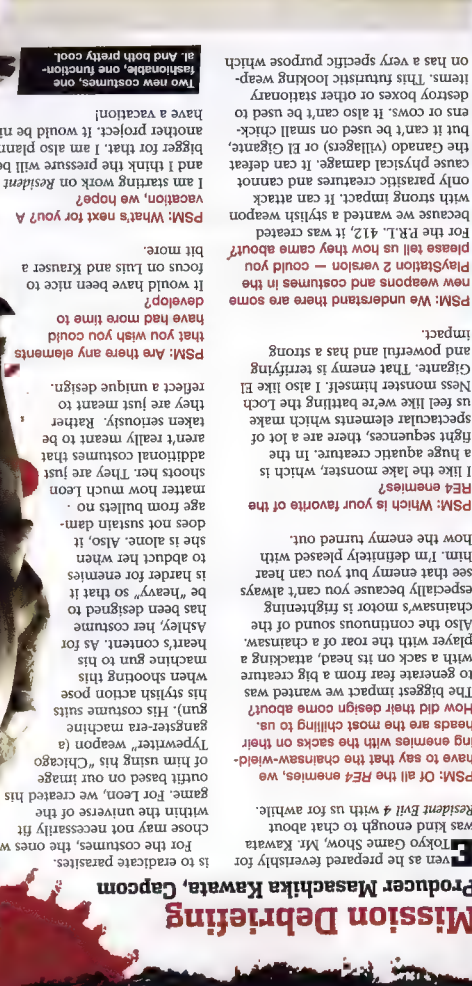
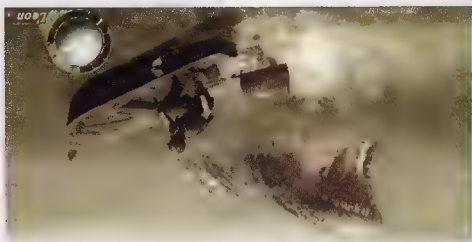
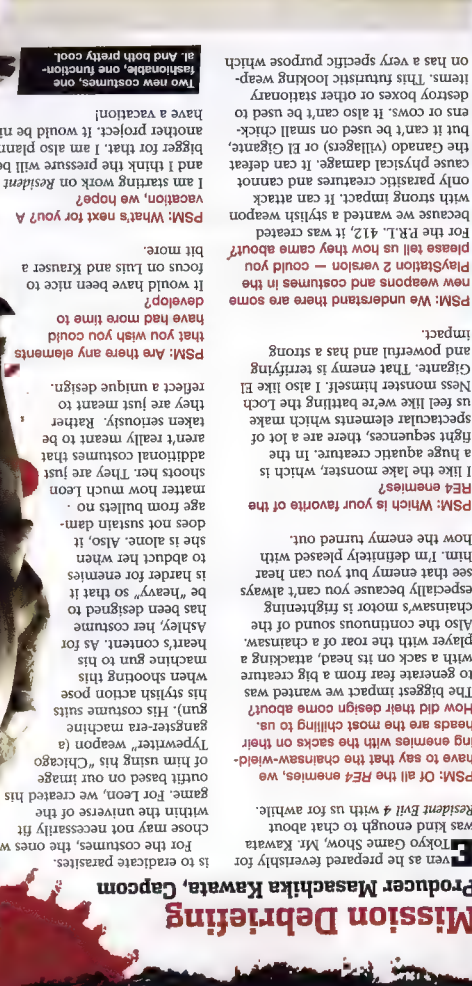
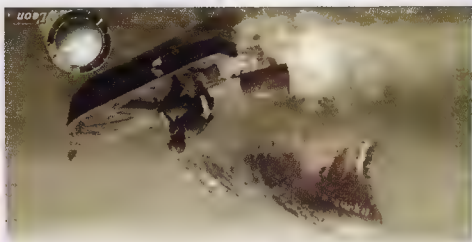
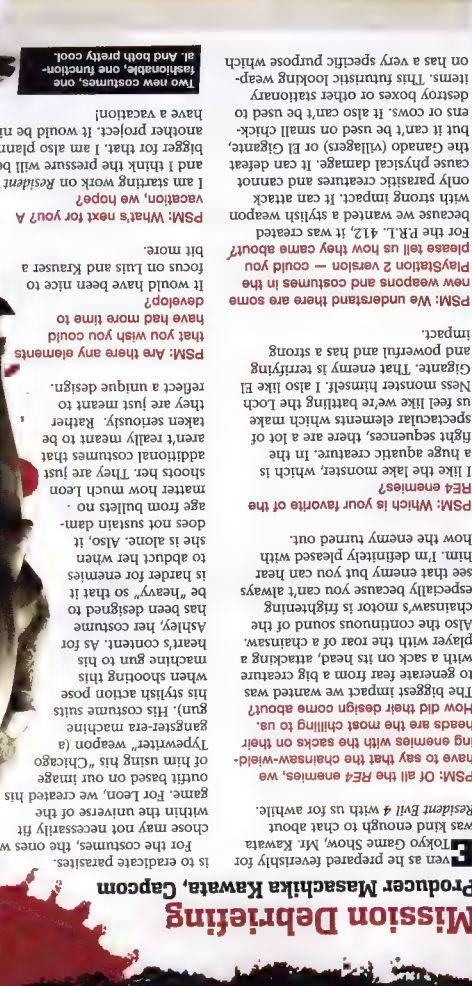
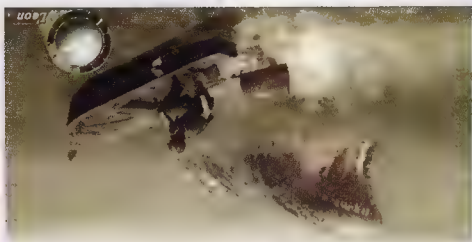
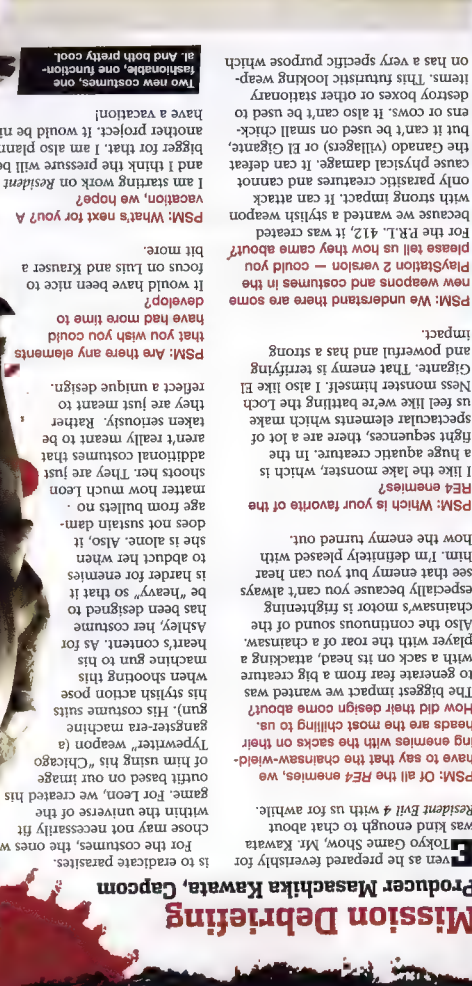
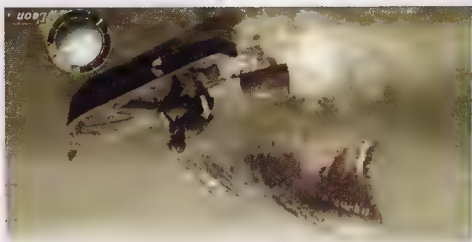
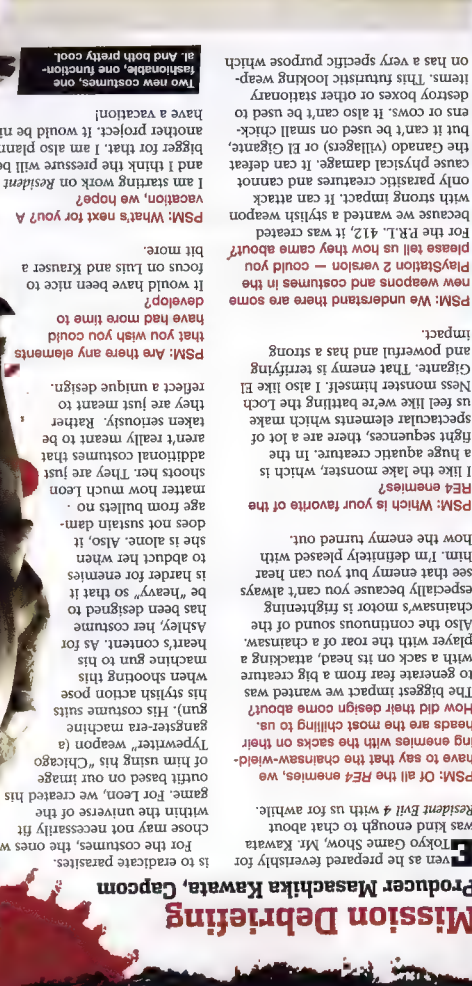
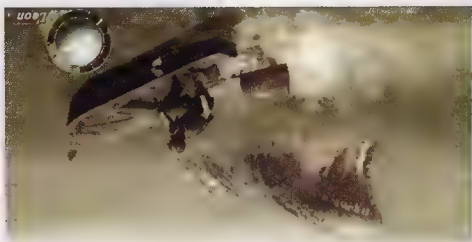
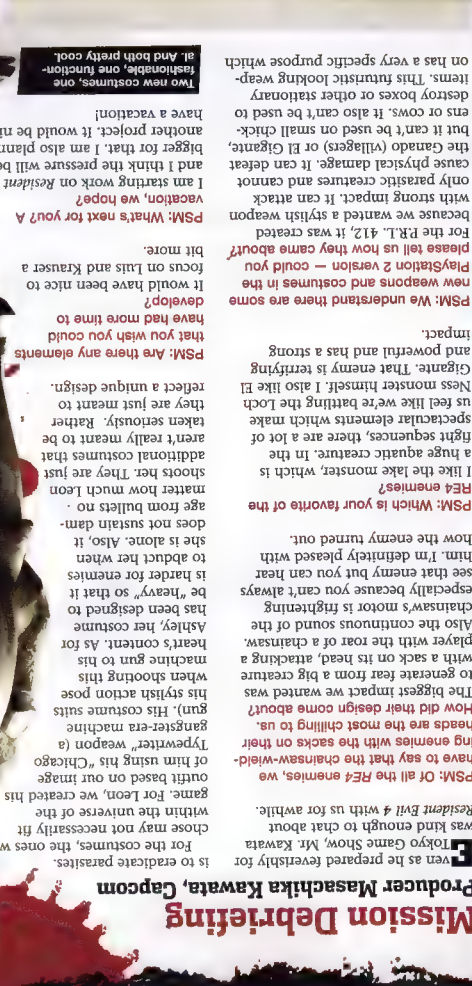
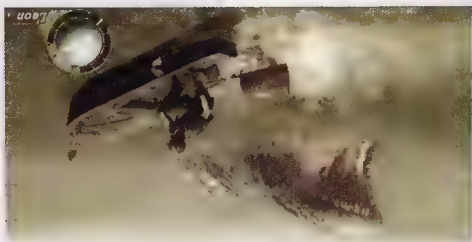
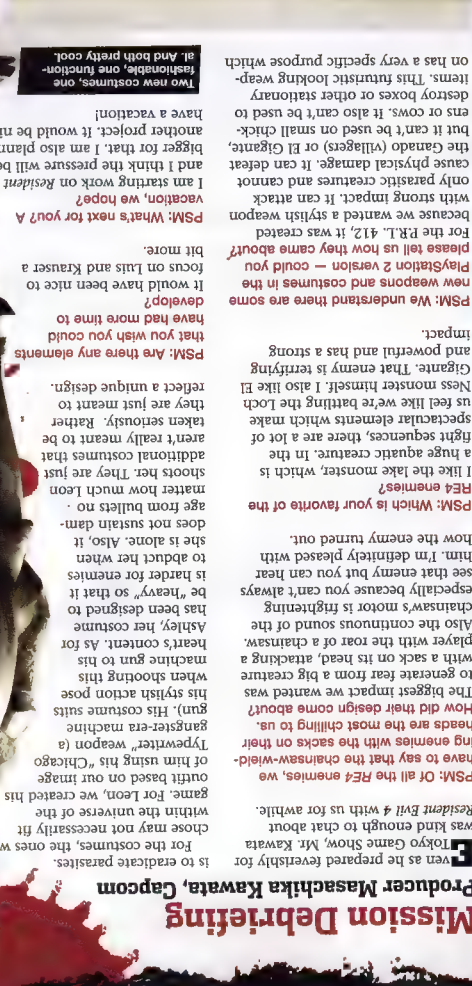
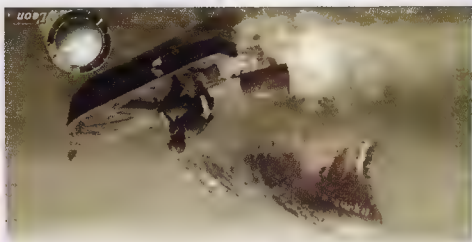
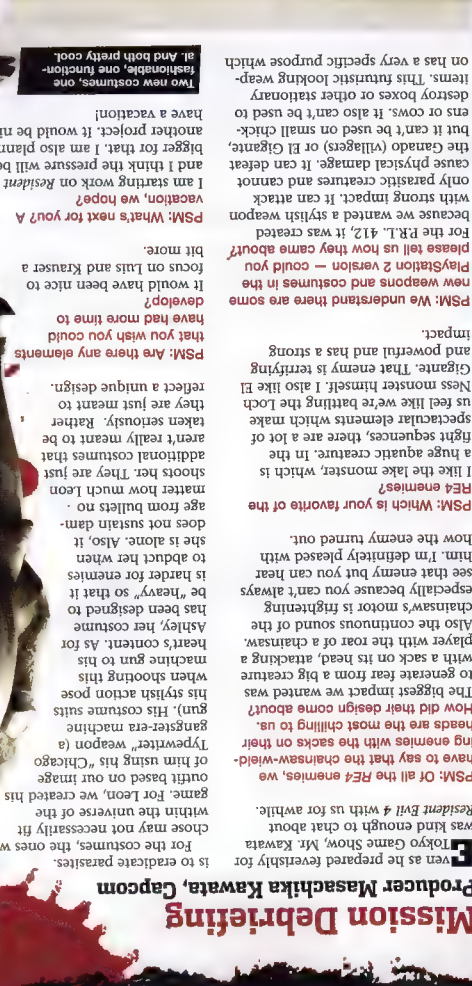
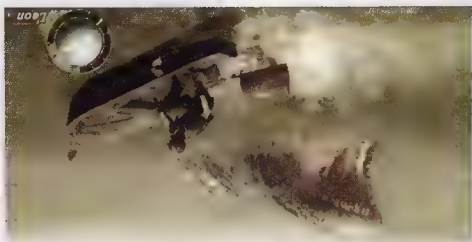
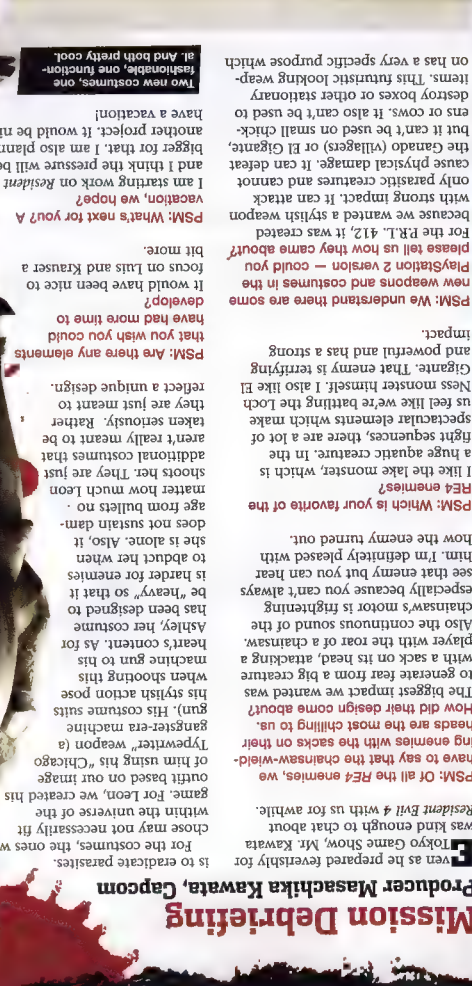
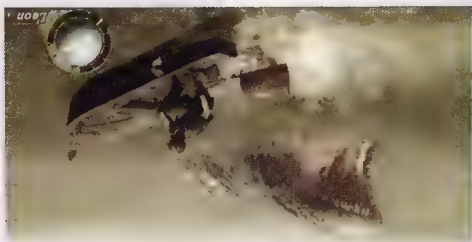
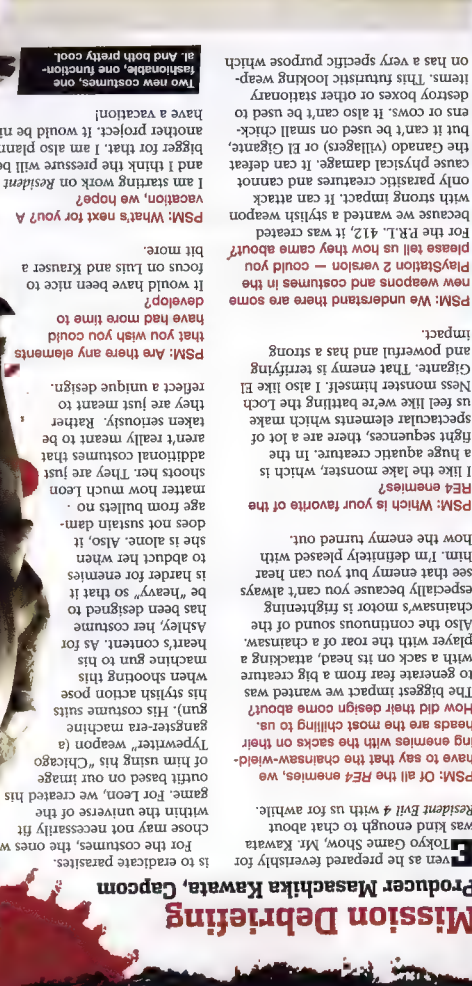
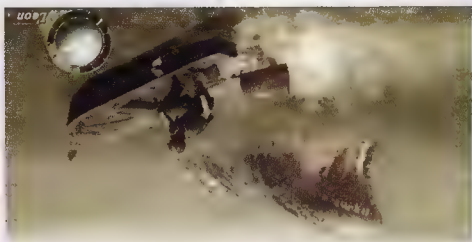
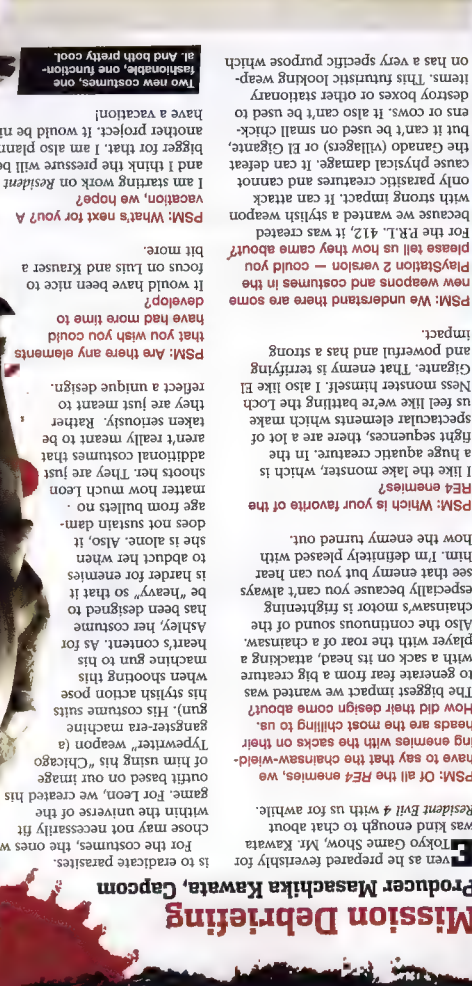
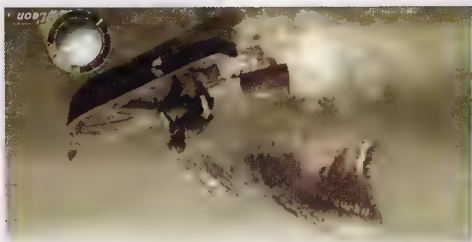
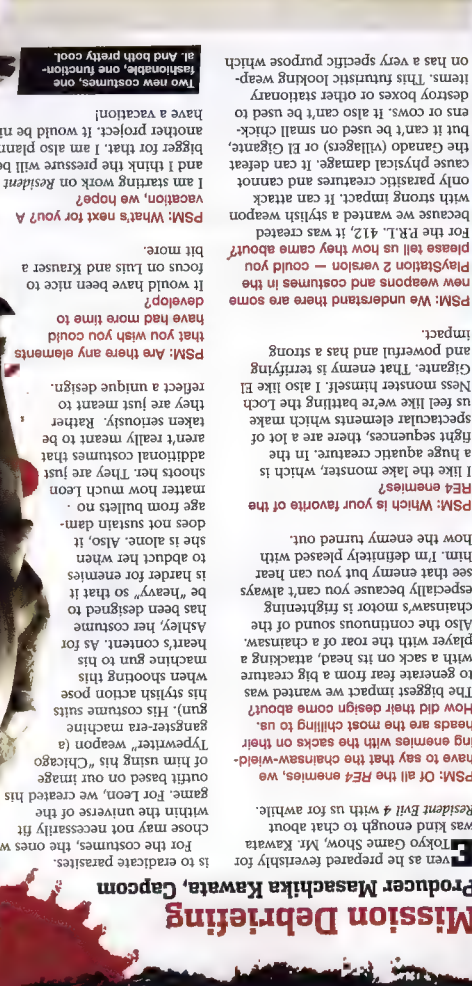
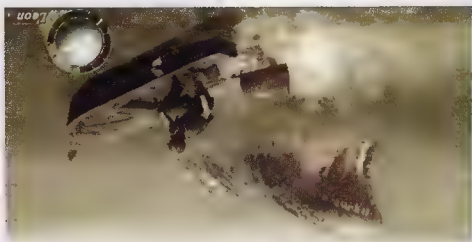
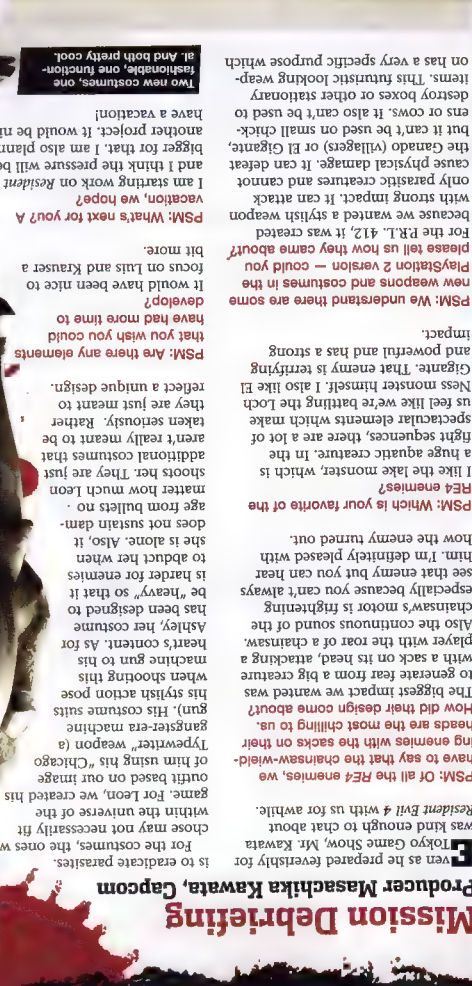
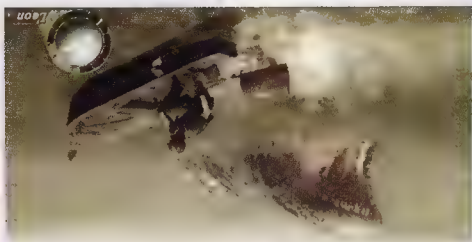
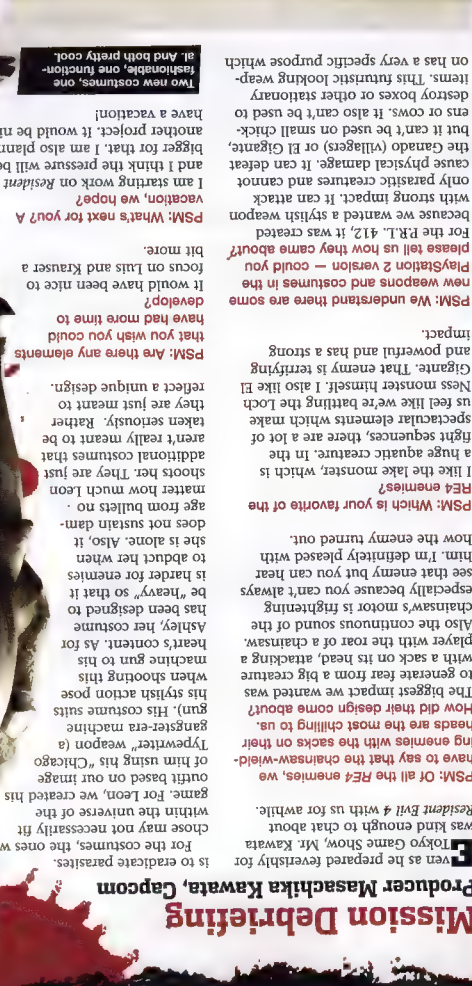
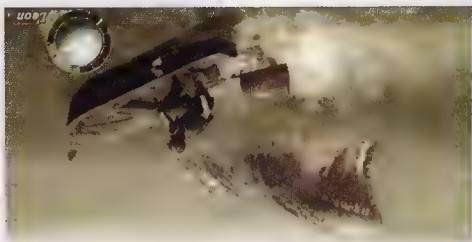
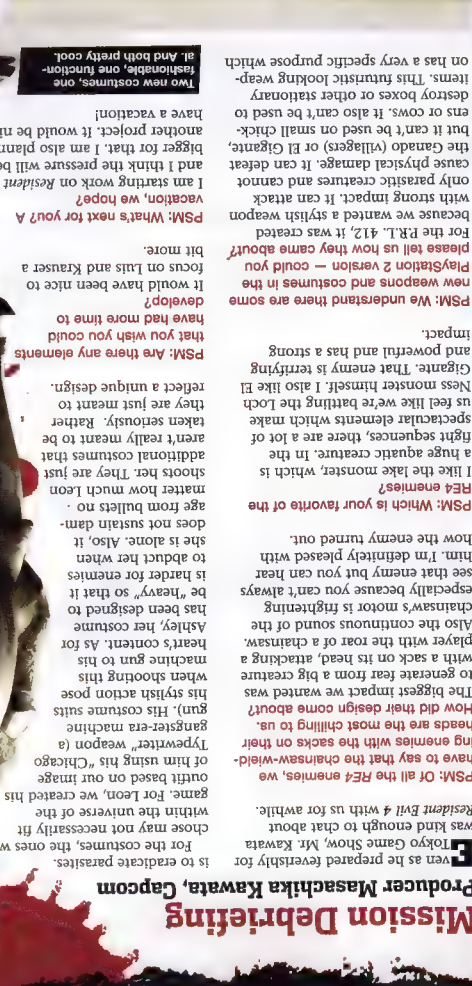
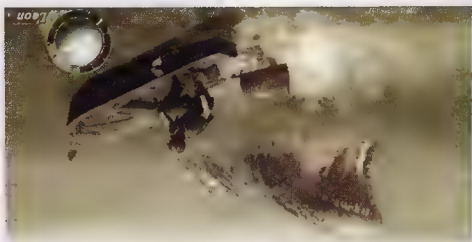
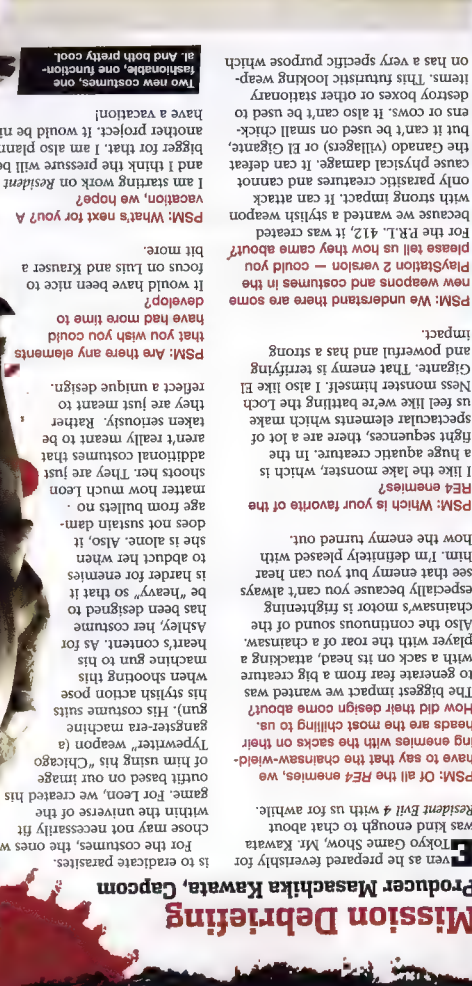
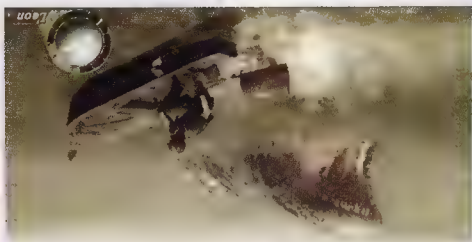
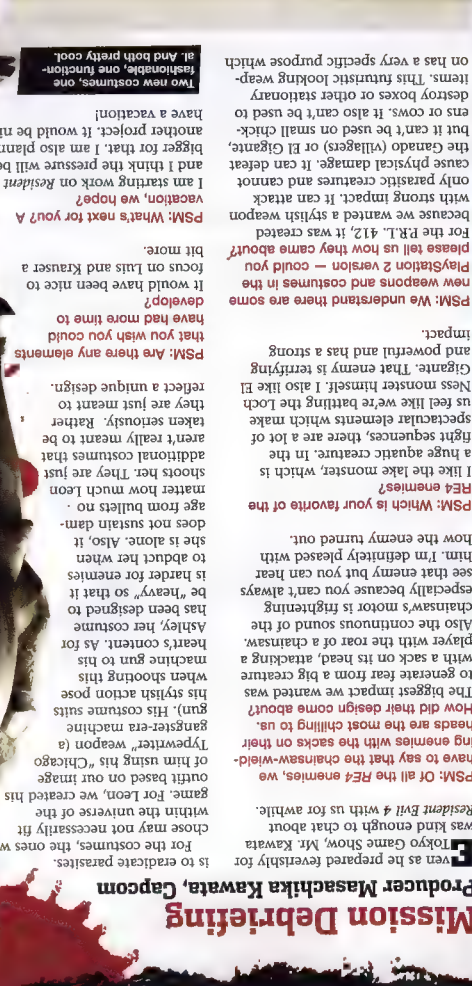
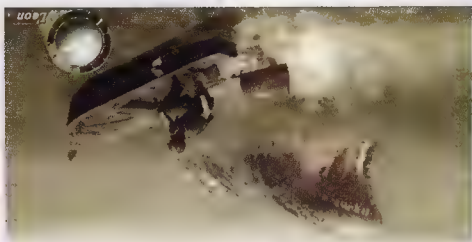
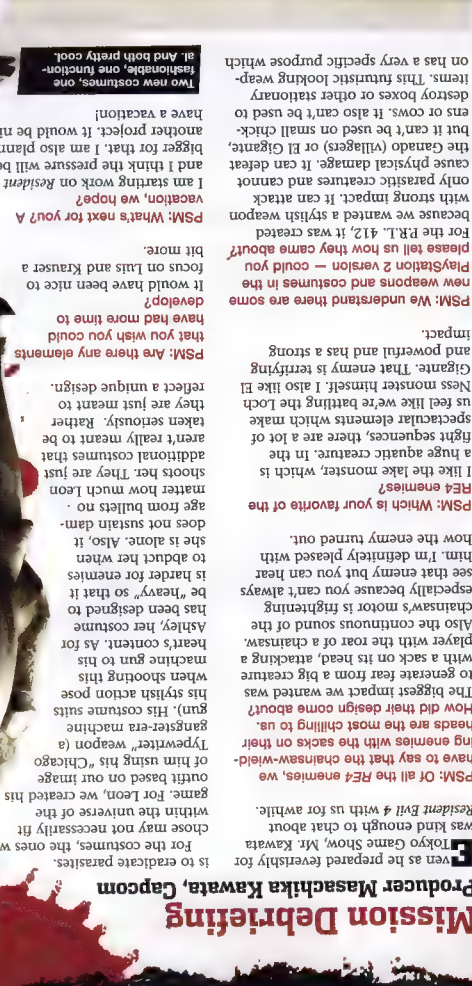
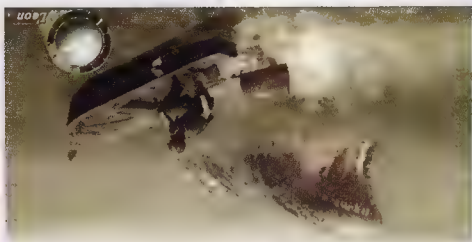
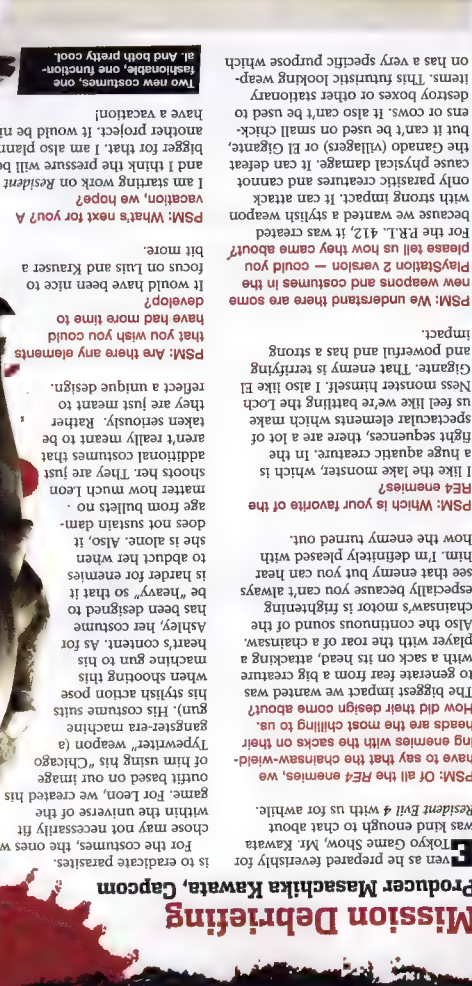
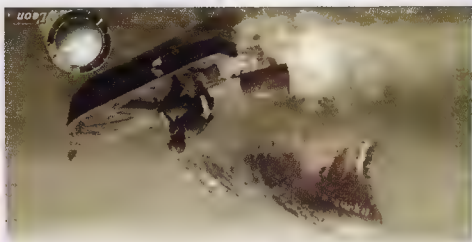
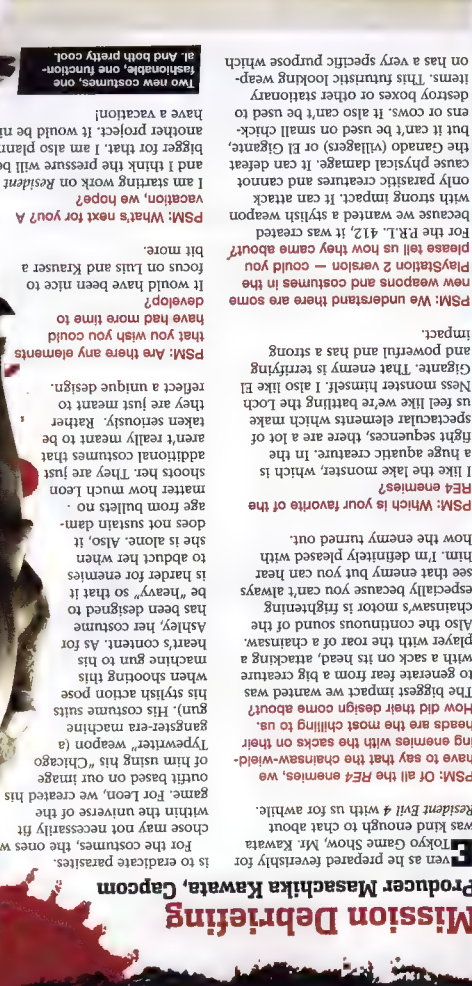
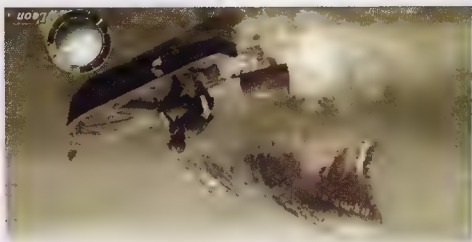
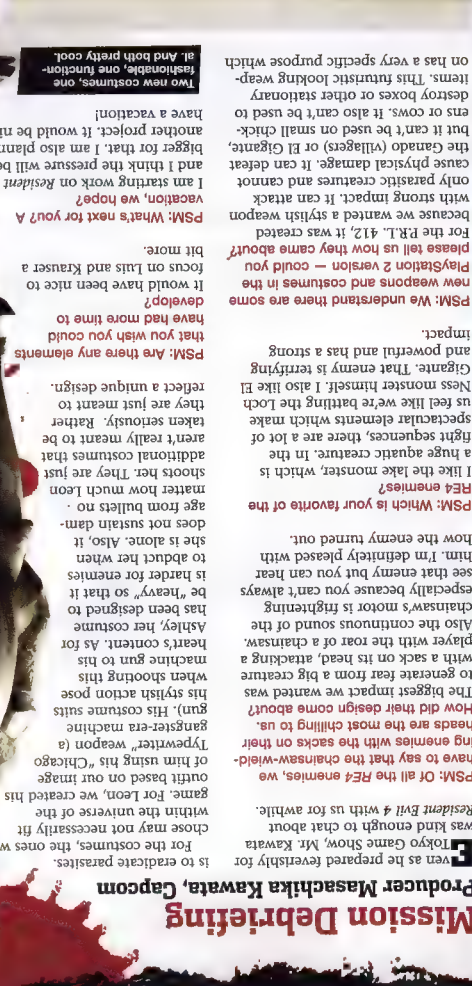
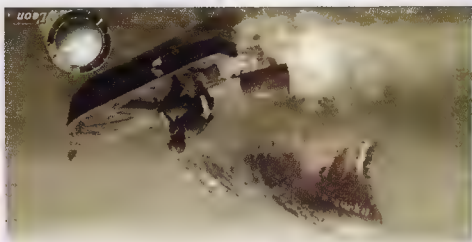
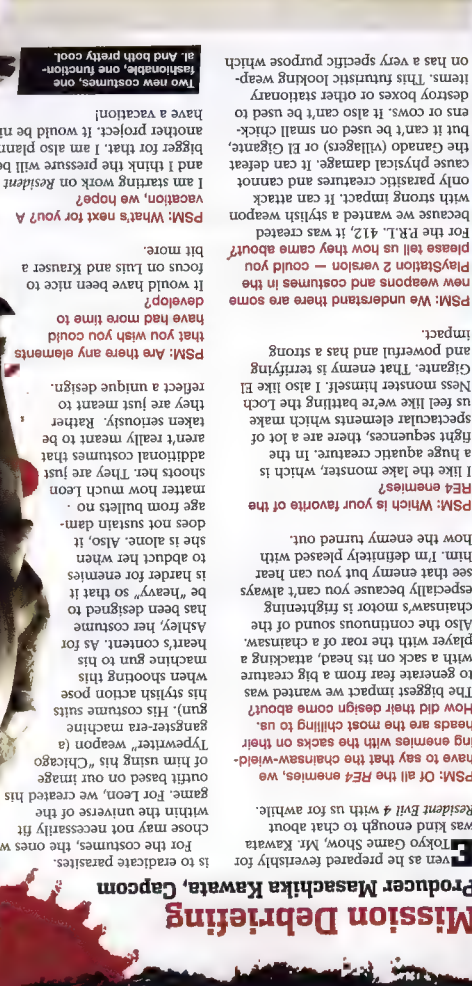
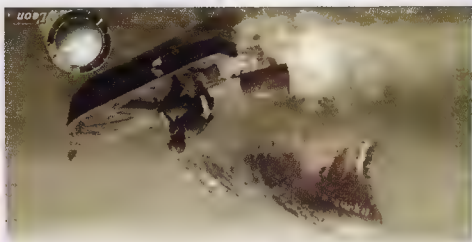
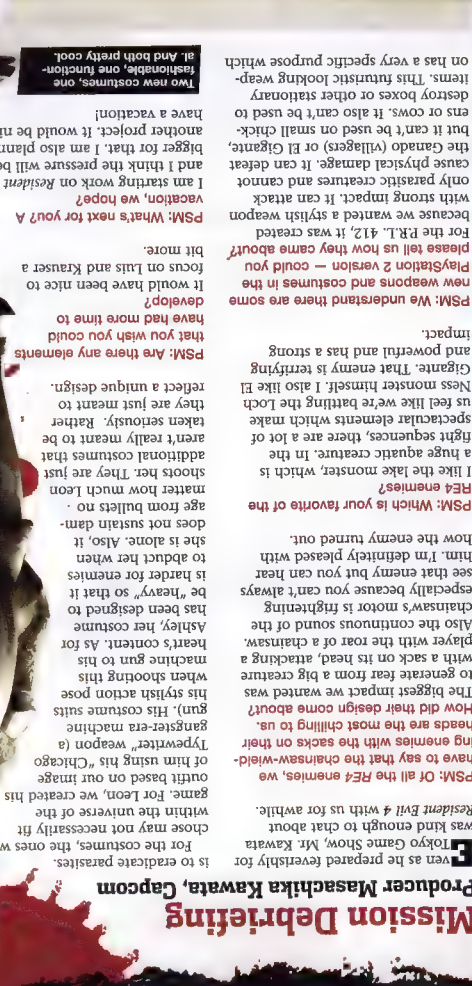
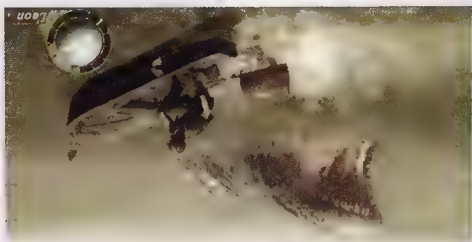
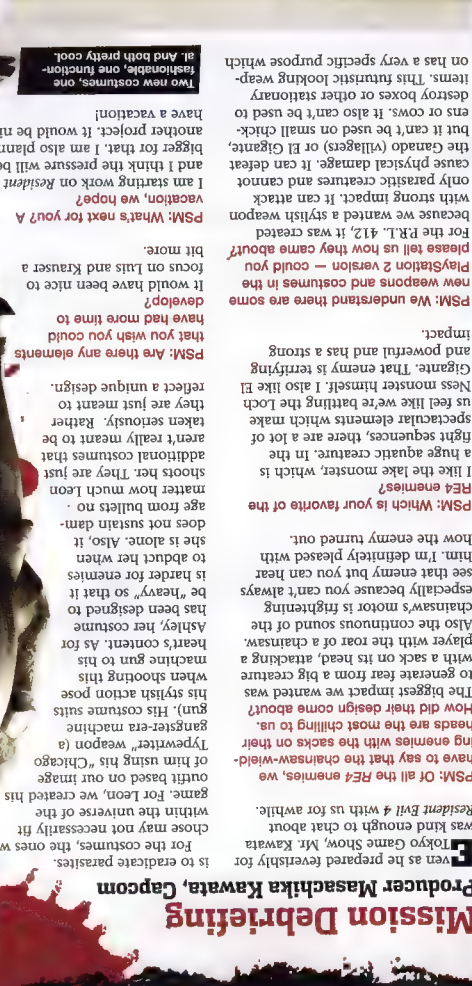
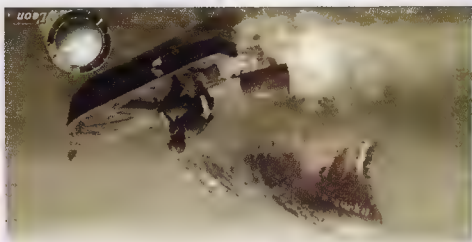
have a vacation!

Two new costumes, one

fashionable, one function-

al. And both pretty cool.

The battle against the lake monster is the first big boss battle in the game ... and we do mean big boss.



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"PILOT A THE INTERCEPTOR, X-WING AND MORE IN INTENSE INTERSTELLAR DOGFIGHTS"

Space battles can be overwhelming at first, but once you get used to them, it's pretty amazing.

A STAR IS BORN

PSM
BUY
OR DIE!



Only one major character per side per map are permitted, but man, are they fun.

Star Wars Battlefront II

No Force jokes. This game rocks!

Packed with 24-on-24 battles that really, truly looked, sounded, and most importantly, actually felt just like the battles in the movies, all last year's *Star Wars Battlefront* really needed was more balance and more match types to make it legendary.

Enter the sequel, in which the original Conquest mode is now joined by Capture the Flag (both one and two-flag flavors), and sometimes by Assault, a sort of deathmatch with only hero characters, and the gleefully dark "Hunt", in which you mow down indigenous species... like, say, Gungans. That's fun multiplayer.

Plus, in addition to new levels set in places like Jabba's palace — complete with Rancor — and the Death Star itself, you can also fight in *outer freakin' space*. Not only can you pilot a TIE Interceptor, X-wing, and more in intense interstellar dogfights, you can also board enemy capital ships, hop out of your vehicle, and blast its crew and systems from the inside out.

That's a lot to accomplish... unless you're playing as one of the 17 major characters: Luke, Darth, the Emperor, Han Solo, young Obi Wan, General Grievous, Boba Fett, Mace Windu, Yoda... you get the idea. There's quite an array of new "regular" classes too, from a new type of stormtrooper to gungans, ewoks... you can even be the wampa on Hoth during Hunt missions. Also, you no longer have to die

to change classes. You can swap at any spawn point.

Space missions seem slightly imbalanced and overlong at first, but with a smart, voice-communicating group, they're amazing. The maps are hit-and-miss: some don't seem to flow as they should, and two-player games could really use some smaller ones, but that's about the only dark side to this one.

It's hot. **ERIC BRATCHER**



Most of the levels are new, but Hoth is back, too. AT-ATs rock.

PSM SCORE 9.0

YODA

+Space battles, more classes, more match types, playable Jedi and Sith lords.

THE EMPEROR

-Space battles tough at first, maps are too big for 2-man games, few Assault maps.

HOW IT STACKS UP

Star Wars Battlefront II	9
Battlefield 2: Modern Combat	9
Star Wars Battlefront	8
Ratchet: Deadlocked	8
Rainbow Six: Lockdown	7.5



STAR WARS
BATTLEFRONT II

PUBLISHED BY
LucasArts

MADE BY
Pandemic

HOW MUCH?
\$49.99

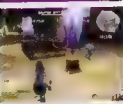
ESRB RATING
Teen

MULTIPLAYER
24-player online, 2-player split screen

DIFFICULTY
Padawan-Emporer

SUPPORTS
+Pro Logic II
+Voice Headset

TRY THIS



+ One of the new modes is "Hunt", in which your goal is to kill as many of a particular native species as possible. It can make multiplayer a challenge if you're a gungan with grenades and a torch facing off against a super battle droid.



The single-player story mode tells the tale of the 501st division of the Clone Army/Stormtrooper legions. It's pretty cool.

SHORT 'N SWEET

Ewok And Roll

Of all the playable classes in *Star Wars Battlefront II*, the one that most surprised us is the Ewok. Yes, they're sickeningly cuddly, and armed only with sticks and stones; but, like the saying says, those weapons still break bones, and Ewoks are so small and quick that enemies have trouble targeting you. Who knew they would be this cool?

Gungans, on the other hand, still suck royally.



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Write about anything you want, as long as it's related to PlayStation gaming or PSM.

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If you've got an HDD in your PS2, did you get it just for Final Fantasy XI, or because you were excited about future games / programs that would make use of it?

Got it just for FFXI

Got it with future games in mind

Submit Vote

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PSMEricBratcher



PSMKaiserHwang

"EVERYTHING EXPLODES IN A BLOODY CHUNKY MESS"



Two-player simultaneous *Mortal Kombat*. Sure, it's basically *Double Dragon* with MK characters, but how sweet is that?

PSM
BUY
OR DIE!

GOD OF GORE

Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks

Mortal Kombat gets good again

The *Mortal Kombat* series hasn't exactly had a good track record when it comes to its forays into the non-fighting genre (*Mortal Kombat Special Forces* anyone?). Where the previous games failed, *Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks* succeeds, bringing fans a game that not only oozes *Mortal Kombat*-ness, but is also simply fun to play.

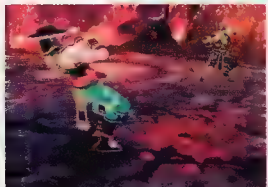
While this is a 3D action game—heavily influenced by *God of War*, which is a good thing—it still retains everything that makes the *Mortal Kombat* series work. You've got all of Liu Kang and Kung Lao's moves at your disposal—including the signature Fatalities. If you don't like those two, there are two other unlockable

characters that should please fans (Hint: "Get over here!"), and what would a *Mortal Kombat* game be without the gore? There's plenty of that, too—there's nothing quite like having Liu Kang punch an enemy's head off, soccer-kick it in midair back towards the body, then watching as everything explodes in a bloody, chunky mess.

Of course, that looks awesome the first dozen times you see it, but you can have too much of a good thing. The constant fighting gets old after awhile, and it can make backtracking even more annoying than it should be. While the environments are varied and are rife with sweet ways to kill



Must resist... making joke... about... "hot babe"...



Get over here! No hints, but sometimes you beat a game and unlock enemies as new playable characters... sometimes.

your enemies (remember the Pit? It's not that hard to get lost—especially because the map isn't that helpful. Still, though, *Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks* is a great way for fans who stopped playing after *Mortal Kombat II* to get back into the series—it's a game that gets back to the basics and is chock-full of *Mortal Kombat* goodness, especially for two players simultaneously. In fact, it may just make you yell, "*Mortal Kobaan!*"

JUSTIN CHENG



MORTAL KOMBAT: SHAOLIN MONKS

PUBLISHED BY
Midway

MADE BY
Midway LA

HOW MUCH?
\$49.99

ESRB RATING
Mature

MULTIPLAYER
Two-player co-op

DIFFICULTY
Adjustable

SUPPORT
+Progressive Scan
+Dolby Pro Logic

TRY THIS



★ As cool as the hand-to-hand combat is, don't forget that you have some projectile attacks, too—they can prove especially useful for the game's final battles where it's not a good idea to get close for too long.

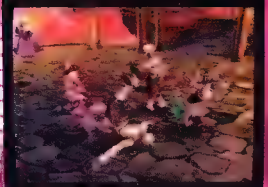


The world is populated by MK folks, from Baraka and Kitana to Goro and beyond.

IT'S FRIENDSHIP

Ko-op Kombat

Sure, the single-player game is fun and all, but it's more fun to play cooperatively. Actually, you're probably better off playing with someone else since there are several secrets that can only be unlocked when you have a buddy with you.



Just like the kissing booth at the fair, this is a situation best enjoyed by two participants at once.

PSM SCORE 8.0

SHAOLIN MONKS

★ It's a GOW-like action game that has all you like from the first two MK games.

SHAOLIN PUNKS

★ The graphical quality is uneven at times; all the fighting can get repetitive.

HOW IT STACKS UP

God of War	9.5
Devil May Cry 3: Dante's Awakening	9
Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks	8
Shadow of Rome	7.5
Bujingai: Forsaken City	7

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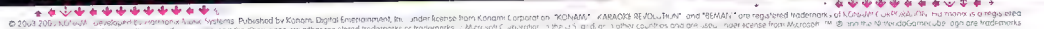


Violence
Strong Language



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MusicInEveryDirection.com

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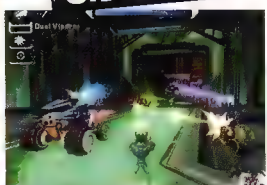
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"THERE'S STILL A LOT TO LIKE ABOUT THIS GAME"

Ratchet: Deadlocked plays almost exactly like the multiplayer sessions in the last Ratchet game. Which isn't all bad, if you like that style of gameplay.

PSM BUY OR DIE!



Of course, there's still real online multiplayer action here as well, though the framerate drops a bit from the silky-smooth animation in the single player mode.



One of the smarter actions your robot wingmen can take is for one of them to erect a shield bubble to protect the other while it captures a node.

BATTLE ROYALE

Ratchet: Deadlocked

Now with more running and gunning

When we first heard about *Ratchet: Deadlocked*, we weren't terribly excited. After all, how can you follow up the fantastic *Ratchet & Clank: Up Your Arsenal* with a game that doesn't even feature Clank? Not to mention that the game is basically like they took the Annihilation Nation and the squad-based side quests from *Up Your Arsenal* and made an entire game out of it.

But now that we've played it, there's still a lot to like about this game.

It still has both Ratchet and Clank — though there are no Clank mis-

sions here, unfortunately. There are still upgradeable, deeply customizable weapons that should feel familiar to longtime fans. There are still vehicles to ride and rails to grind and even some platforms to jump. A few familiar faces return, and the series' signature humor is definitely still here.

There are some new features, too. You have a squad of two customizable robots at your beck and call — though you're limited mostly to calling them back to you, reviving them, and giving them context sensitive commands, like telling them to plant a bomb or toss an EMP grenade.

The missions could use a bit more

variety, though — they're mostly FPS standards, like survival, death-match, node capture, and so on. Plus, the commentators, who are present because Ratchet is participating in a gladiator-style reality game show, repeat themselves too much. Oddly, the controls don't feel as tight as in the previous games.

Despite these imperfections, *Ratchet: Deadlocked* is still pretty enjoyable, especially for the series' fans or those who don't mind a lot less variety than this series usually has — it just doesn't quite live up to the standards set by its predecessors. **JUSTIN CHENG**



RATCHET: DEADLOCKED

PUBLISHED BY Sony CE

MADE BY Insomniac

HOW MUCH? \$39.99

ESRB RATING Teen

DIFFICULTY Adjustable

MULTIPLAYER 2 offline, 10 online

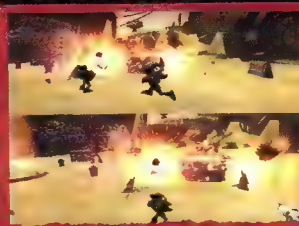
SUPPORT +Widescreen +Progressive Scan

TRY THIS



★ After you've finished the game, stay tuned after the credits. There's an extra little movie that fans who finished *Up Your Arsenal* should appreciate.

SEEK AND DESTROY



Upping your arsenal

In *Ratchet: Deadlocked*, you can buy modifiers for your weapons that do extra damage. So you can, for example, make every weapon do extra acid damage or even give all your weapons the ability to morph your enemies into explosive farm animals.

PSM SCORE 8.0

RATCHET

★ Much of what you liked about the series is in this game; weapons are staples.

WRETCHED

★ Should have more control over your AI allies; commentators are repetitive.

HOW IT STACKS UP

Ratchet & Clank: Up Your Arsenal	10
Ratchet: Deadlocked	8
Sly 3	8
Jak X	7
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger	6.5



REVIEWS

You can actually use your EyeToy to scan your face into wall hangings for your sims to admire.



THE SIMS 2

PUBLISHED BY
EA Games

MADE BY
Maxis

HOW MUCH?
\$39.99

ESRB RATING
Teen

MULTIPLAYER
2-player co-op

DIFFICULTY
Varies, like life

SUPPORTS
+EyeToy
+HDD

LIFE SERIAL

The Sims 2

Just like your life... but better

While the PS2 version of *The Sims 2* can't offer everything from the PC original (it doesn't include babies, kids or teens), it hangs onto the core gameplay while adding new console-friendly wrinkles.

For example, you can now directly control the Sims using the analog stick,

just like any other game's characters. Also, Maxis has added... potion mixing! Sort of. The new recipe system lets you harvest ingredients from plants and fishtanks (um, okaay...), then turn them into food with effects from aphrodisiacs to super-energizers.

They've also fooled around with the socializing engine, although the results are a bit frustrating. Sims "remember" previous conversations, so if one conversation doesn't go well, the next won't go too well, either. Since the PS2 version retains the Wants and Needs "Story Mode", sometimes that means if you guess wrong about how a sim would respond, it's then an uphill battle to get them friendly enough to complete a Social Need. It's a pain.

Still, that small misstep aside, *The Sims 2* is every bit as addictive and charming as *The Sims* ever were. Degg-degg!

JEFF LUNDRIGAN



Be careful when using the telescope. Alien abductions can trigger big-time changes in your sim's personality.



Each sim has a unique personality. Some are better at social graces, and some are less outgoing. There's apparently no stat for "mad gaming skills", though.

PSM 9.0

KOOJI

*Addictive, clever, Simlish may replace Klingon as favorite geek language.

SHOO FLEE!

*Strips out some PC version's more interesting features, like generations of sims.

FULL SAIL

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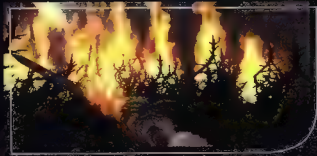
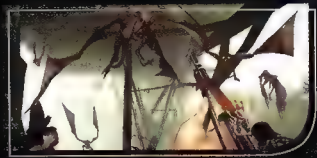
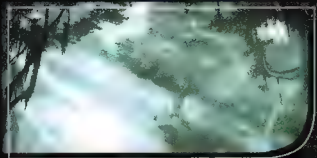
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LOOK INTO THE EYES OF THE



THINK YOU KNOW KONG? THINK AGAIN.

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ADVERTISEMENT

BEAST





**ING KONG FIRST
MADE HIS
CINEMATIC
DEBUT in 1933,
thrilling
audiences with
a powerful
story and**

**groundbreaking special effects for its
time. Peter Jackson's current
reimagining promises to do no less,
bringing the perilous world of Skull
Island to life as only Jackson can –
Jackson and famed game designer
Michel Ancel, that is.**

+ + + + +

AN AVID GAMER, PETER JACKSON STARTED DREAMING UP IDEAS

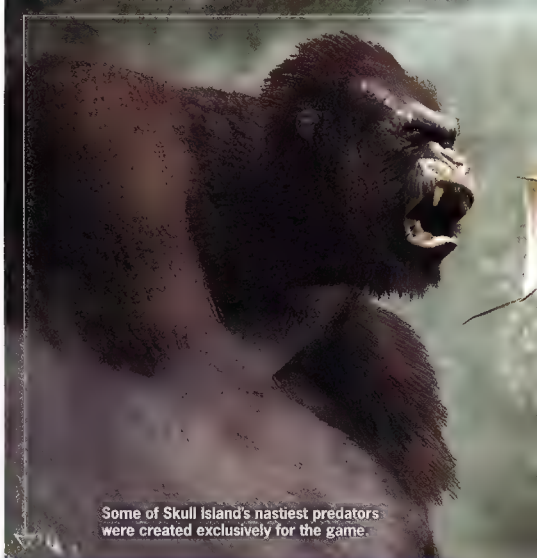
for a King Kong video game as soon as he started the movie. But to make a video game as memorable as the movie, he needed a creative partner with a true talent for rendering both fantasy and emotion. Then he played Beyond Good & Evil™, an epic adventure crafted by renowned game designer Michel Ancel. Right away, Jackson knew he'd found his man. And, judging by the jaw-dropping beauty and intensity of the gameplay, Jackson and Ancel have succeeded brilliantly.

BREATHING LIFE INTO A LEGEND

Jackson and Ancel set out to create a game deeper and more immersive than the film itself. So the game had to look and feel just as convincing as the "real" world captured on film. To achieve this, the development team used every trick in the book – plus a few that aren't.

A rare technique called "inverse kinematics" adds frightening realism to the behavior of Skull Island's predators. This technique varies and synchronizes the animations used for each type of creature, depending on the creature's AI. For example, if you're detected by a T-Rex, you'll see the monster turn its eyes and head directly toward you, lunging over rocks and smashing through the jungle in a convincing attempt to make you its dinner.

But techniques like inverse kinematics would mean little without a sophisticated AI system governing the behavior of Skull Island's denizens. Some species attack alone, while others use clever pursuit tactics to attack in groups. Fortunately, your enemies aren't the only intelligent creatures on Skull Island. Your crew will protect you, suggest solutions to problems, and generally react as real humans – real scared humans – would.

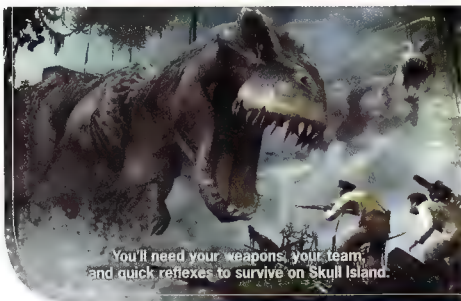


Some of Skull Island's nastiest predators were created exclusively for the game.

"[Ancel] has just a great storytelling skill in making you so involved in the game as a player that you actually become emotionally attached to the characters that you're playing with." – Peter Jackson.

And just wait till you feast your eyes on the stunningly detailed jungle of Skull Island. Thanks to clever layering of the largest number of 2D sprites, filters, and effects ever used in any video game – including meteorological effects like water, fog, wind, fire, and smoke – you'll almost be able to feel the hot, humid jungle air. Blades of grass rustle convincingly around your legs. Sunlight patterns shift subtly. In short, this jungle doesn't just look pretty. It feels alive.

Perhaps the greatest creation of all is Kong himself. Agile and powerful, Kong moves through Skull Island with remarkable force and speed. And take a close look at his fur; the dev team used intricate 3D effects to actually animate each separate strand. The overall effect is breathtakingly real.



**You'll need your weapons, your team,
and quick reflexes to survive on Skull Island.**



Where guns fail, brute strength often prevails.

A MASSIVE STEP FORWARD: INNOVATIONS IN IMMERSION

Every technical decision for Peter Jackson's King Kong has been made with an eye to thoroughly immersing the player in the world of the game. For example, you can still move and look around while scripted plot events occur, unlike nearly all other games. And the absence of a heads-up display makes the action feel more immediate. For example, when your character suffers an injury, you won't see any shrinking "health bar." Instead, your vision will blur and turn red.

The game also offers new experiences that don't appear in the movie. In addition to movie creatures, Jackson added beasts not seen in the film. Multiple pathways offer you a different experience every time you play, so that you'll never have to play the same game twice. The difficulty level scales fluidly according to your performance, growing more challenging as you improve.

Most impressive of all is the range of emotions evoked by the alternating gameplay possibilities. By inviting you to play as both Jack Driscoll and Kong himself, the game delivers an unforgettable mix of intensity, realism, and entertainment through a rare combination of first- and third-person play.

PLAYING WITH POWER: HEROES GREAT AND SMALL

Conceived by Jackson and realized to phenomenal effect by the development team, the dual gameplay between Jack and Kong delivers a dramatic shift in perspective and power.

As Jack Driscoll, you're outnumbered and overpowered by predators bigger, stronger, and faster than you. To heighten the sense of fear and danger, you play Jack's role in first-person. You'll have to advance through a dense jungle, never knowing what lurks behind the next tree. Armed only



with the weapons you can carry, you'll never win just by fighting. To stay alive, you'll need other strategies, such as tricking predators into battling each other and using the environment to set clever traps.

At a key moment, you begin playing Kong in third-person. When the camera pulls back to reveal Kong's mighty perspective, you feel a rush of freedom and power. Delivered from the harried perspective of Jack, you inherit swift movements, powerful battle attacks, and the gratifying ability to smash, throw, and scale just about everything around you. But playing as Kong isn't just a walk in the park. Confronted by multiple enemies with clever attack patterns, you'll have to fight hard to defeat huge T-Rexes and outsmart swarms of smaller predators.

The alternating gameplay intensifies the emotions already inherent in the story. Ancel, like Jackson, never loses sight of his audience, meting out new challenges just when you want them the most. The result is nothing short of an unforgettable game experience. ■

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG



PlayStation.2



UBISOFT

There are a few impressive boss battles in *God of War*, but we've never played a game like this before. No one has.



SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

PUBLISHED BY Sony

MADE BY Sony

HOW MUCH? \$39.99

ESRB RATING Teen

MULTIPLAYER No

DIFFICULTY Average

SUPPORTS

+Progressive scan
+Widescreen

TRY THIS



It's tough to give a hint that doesn't spoil any battles, so here's some general advice: if an enemy has a glowy part, shoot or stab it there, because it could be a weak spot. Also, if you're stuck, remember that the key to defeating your foe is always either part of the environment or an element of the colossus itself. Always.

WORTH THE WAIT

Shadow of the Colossus

You have got to play this!



There's quite a bit of pop-in on the main environment map, but the colossi and battlefields look perfect.

Sometimes, a video game is released that defies typical gameplay genres and creates a truly fresh, absolutely unique experience. Sometimes, a videogame arrives with amazing visual design and an incredible soundtrack. Sometimes, a videogame appears with characters you come to care greatly for, and whose events have a real and legitimate emotional effect upon you. Sometimes,

a game shows up that you know could put that annoying, "Are Videogames Art?" debate away for good if the naysayers spent just one hour with it.

Sometimes, all of these things happen, but you could probably count on one hand the games that have managed to combine all of these qualities at once. Here, I'll get you started: *Shadow of the Colossus*.

In no game's shadow

At its core, *Shadow of the Colossus* is an action game, not entirely unlike *God of War* or *Devil May Cry*. It's third-person. You have a sword and a bow and arrows. You kill monsters.

Calling this just another action game is like saying *The Lord of the Rings* is just another fantasy book about wizards and sword fights. It's so much more majestic, with such a unique mood and sense of scale and artistry, that it becomes something greater.

The story is minimal, but moving. As the game opens, we watch a young man on horseback journeying through a vast, gorgeous, yet deserted land. He enters a massive, crumbling stone temple and gently places the body of a beautiful young girl on a sunlit altar. Black, shadowy spirits rise ominously from the floor, but he draws his sword and they dissipate. A deep, godlike voice emanates from the skylight above, and the young man asks the voice, a deity, to return the innocent maiden's soul.

The voice explains that it can only grant the young man's wish if he first uses the sword to slay 16 colossi who inhabit the land. Without hesitation, he agrees. It's a long beginning, but a very cinematic one, and it sets the melancholy, atmospheric tone of the game perfectly.



In sunny areas, your sword will reflect light in the direction you need to go, or toward the colossus' weak point during battle.

"IF YOU CARE ENOUGH ABOUT GAMES TO READ THIS MAGAZINE YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF TO PLAY *SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS*"



One is often reminded of that Led Zeppelin classic: "Trampled Underfoot."



Locating the colossus is only the start of your concerns. Once you've found it, you have to figure out how to climb onto it.



As much as we hate to say it, this game is actually probably a generation early. It would have been mind bending on a PS3.

Colossal combat

This leads us to the meat of the game: the battles. They're epic; a boy and his horse against flesh-and-stone monstrosities often so massive that they should have their own weather. The basic premise is always the same: find the colossus somewhere in the massive game world, discover a way to climb onto the colossus itself, locate its weak spot, and jam your sword into it until the beast perishes.

Naturally, the colossi don't go down willingly, and they differ wildly in size and shape: some are humanoid, some are animal, some walk, some fly, swim, or burrow, some are incredibly huge, some just really big. Thus, each requires a unique strategy to defeat, so each battle feels remarkably fresh and different.

Though its strengths are many, *Shadow* also labors under a few technical burdens. The texture shimmering and pop-in in the admittedly gorgeous landscape are simply cosmetic — and the colossi models are flawless to the point of being awe-inspiring, but other elements affect gameplay. For instance, while the animations are artistically beautiful, the game chugs along at a jerky, barely-30 fps framerate.

Similarly, the camera's constant, well-meaning quest to always give the most cinematic view finds it too-often careening wildly about, or doggedly aiming too high, too low, or off to one

side. Battles are intense enough without having to wrestle the camera, too.

Finally, partially because the camera is so mobile, the horse's old-school, *Resident Evil*-style, "up is forward, left and right are pivot" control scheme makes it far too likely that you'll charge directly in the wrong direction at the wrong time. It would have been nice to at least have the option to just point the stick where you want ol' Trigger to go.

These concerns keep *Shadow* from earning a 10, and they will be enough to put off some players, but I recommend you persevere. This is destined to go down in history as one of the PS2's best and most unique titles.

Bottom Line: if you care enough about games to read this magazine, you owe it to yourself to play *Shadow of the Colossus*. **ERIC BRATCHER**

PSM SCORE **9.5**

COURAGEOUS

★Amazing blend of artistic vision, white-knuckle action, and fantastic moments.

BROKEN SPIRIT

—Camera has mind of its own, no surround sound, some graphical chugging.

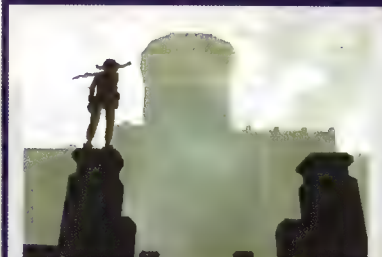
HOW IT STACKS UP

<i>Shadow of the Colossus</i>	9.5
<i>God of War</i>	9.5
<i>Devil May Cry 3</i>	9
<i>Incredible Hulk: Maximum Destruction</i>	7

COLOSSAL HERITAGE

The Ico Connection

Sony's development name for *Shadow of the Colossus* was *Nico*. It's an obvious reference to the development team's last project, the captivating cult-hit, *Ico*. If you haven't played it, you really should check it out. It plays very differently (no colossi — just a boy, a girl, lots of shadow spirits, and a huge castle), but it's got that same sad-but-beautiful atmosphere, massive sense of scale, and pure, artistic soul.

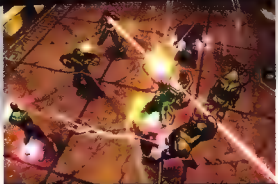


In a brief respite from his adventures, our hero checks in to the MGM Grand for a much needed vacation.

There are multiple costumes right from the get-go. It's a nice bonus for those of us who'd rather not wait the whole game to don Wolverine's yellow-and-blues.



"A VERY TASTY MUTANT CAKE"



While basic gameplay is essentially still "go from point A to point B and beat the crap out of anything in between", there's no denying its appeal.

PSM
BUY
ORDIE!

MUTATED... FOR FUN!

X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse

Bigger, better, more... mutanty?

Marvel's mutant heroes are back for another *Champions of Norrath*-style Action RPG throw-down. This time, they find themselves begrudgingly teamed with arch-nemesis Magneto's team. Their mutual foe? Apocalypse, who has both kidnapped green-haired X-gal Polaris and attacked Magneto's base Genosha.

Even if you never played the first game, you'll have no trouble jumping into the action, which sends you into combat with a squad of four characters. You control one and the AI drives the other three, but you can take command of any of the four at any time with a quick tap of the d-pad.

There are 15 characters at the start (and at least three unlockables), all of whom possess roughly twice as many mutant powers as in the first

Legends. That's both cool and a little overwhelming. The control system has been tweaked, too, so you have quick access to more special attacks at once than before.

There are some nice player aids as well. You can teleport back to your home base any time, and players who aren't into micro-management can choose to have gear, stat points, and abilities auto-selected. Graphics have improved greatly, with the side effect that the characters don't stand out from the environments as well as they did before. It's a fair trade, though.

XMLII also boasts online play. Up to four players can bash through the full Story mode or Danger Room and Skirmish modes with full voice communication. That's the final icing on a very tasty mutant cake. **ERIC BRATCHER**

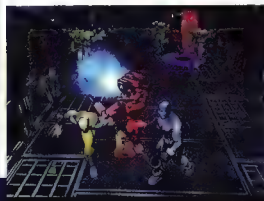
PSM SCORE 8.5

JEAN GREY
*Better graphics, more player-friendly tweaks, expanded skills and controls.

MADDY PRYOR
*What happened to the ability to real, co-op online play? That's a serious downer.

HOW IT STACKS UP

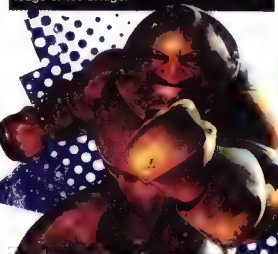
Champions of Norrath	9
X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse	8.5
Champions: Return to Arms	8
X-Men Legends	7.5
Shrek 2	6



Activision's FAQ sheet for this game claims you'll go to "intriguing spots around the globe such as Egypt and New York City." We're not kidding.



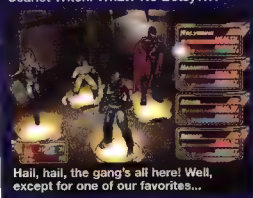
The AI is pretty solid, though path-finding is suspect - it's not uncommon for a team member to walk right off a narrow cliff ledge or ice bridge.



WITH IS PSYLOCKE?

Lineup Changes

The revolving door roster of The Avengers still takes the cake, but this year's game has swapped a few members. Not counting unlockables, you've got Cyclops, Wolverine, Storm, Magneto, Juggernaut, Toad, Gambit, Bishop, Iceman, Jean Gray, Nightcrawler, Colossus, Sunfire and Scarlet Witch. What? No Betsy?!?!?



Hail, hail, the gang's all here! Well, except for one of our favorites...



X-MEN LEGENDS II:
RISE OF
APOCALYPSE

PUBLISHED BY
Activision

MADE BY
Raven

HOW MUCH?
\$49.99

ESRB RATING
Teen

MULTIPLAYER
4 player online or
off: story mode,
skirmish, and
danger room.

DIFFICULTY
Variable

SUPPORT
+Online Play (2-4 players)
+USB headset

TRY THIS



* The default AI for your team members is always set to Normal. Call us belligerent, but in all but a few specific battles, we prefer "Aggressive." You'll find the toggle as part of the same menus where you assign stats and powers.

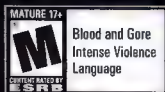
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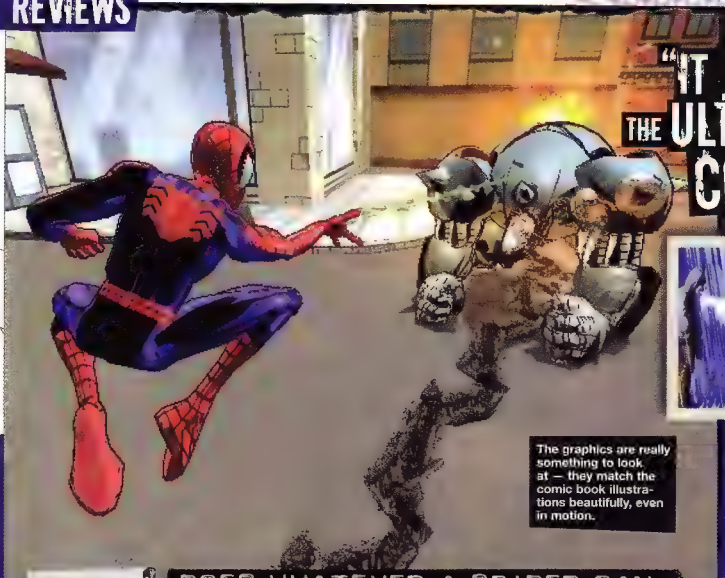
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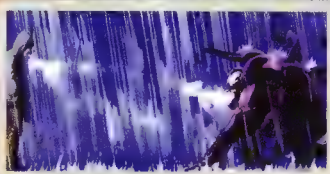


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"IT JUST FEELS LIKE
THE ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN
COMIC BOOK"

The graphics are really something to look at — they match the comic book illustrations beautifully, even in motion.



The story fits right into the comic book's continuity, and tells the story of Spidey and Venom's relationship.



Venom versus Carnage. Awesome.



ULTIMATE
SPIDER-MAN

PUBLISHED BY
Activision

MADE BY
Treyarch
HOW MUCH?
\$49.95

ESRB RATING
Teen
MULTIPLAYER
No

DIFFICULTY
Average

SUPPORTS
Surround Sound

DOES WHATEVER A SPIDER CAN

Ultimate Spider-Man



Not quite ultimate, but pretty close

While *Spider-Man 2* on PS2 focused mainly on recreating the movie version of our favorite wall-crawler, *Ultimate Spider-Man* takes a decidedly different approach — one that should definitely please the fans of the comic books. This is, after all, *Ultimate Spider-Man*, based on the hit comic book series, and for the most part, it works rather well.

The game really captures the essence of the original source material — it just feels like the Ultimate Spider-Man comic book. The game's graphical style matches comic book artist Mark Bagley's art, but in 3D. The cinematics get broken up into panels, just like a comic book. And Spider-Man really does sound like Spider-Man — the dialog by comic book/video game writer Brian Michael Bendis is simply spot-on. Plus, the game's story fits right into the comic book series' continuity, which fans should appreciate.

Of course, the most important part is the gameplay, and the game's pretty solid in that department, too. The structure is akin to *Spider-Man 2* — there's an open city to explore, filled with people to save and widgets to collect. And to further sweeten the deal, you

can play as Venom, who actually feels different than Spider-Man, which is certainly a good thing. In fact, playing as Venom is one of the game's highlights — jumping around the city and tearing Silver Sable's soldiers apart is pretty sweet.

It's unfortunate, though, that Spider-Man doesn't have all the moves he had in *Spider-Man 2*, that this game is notably shorter, and that it sometimes feels like you spend too much time web-swinging through those pesky "chase" missions. But *Ultimate Spider-Man* is still a very good game, and well worth playing, especially if you know the comic. JUSTIN CHENG

PSM SCORE 8.0

SPIDER-MAN

+It looks, sounds, and feels just like the comic book; playing as Venom is fun.

VENOM

+Spidey lacks the moves he had in previous games; chasing bad guys gets old.

HOW IT STACKS UP

God of War	9.5
Ultimate Spider-Man	8
Spider-Man 2	8
The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction	7
Predator: Concrete Jungle	6

TRY THIS



One of Spider-Man's best moves is the jump kick. All you have to do is jump in the air, then press the kick button, which will send Spidey flying towards his target like a missile. It's a simple move, but it can be pretty effective.

JUST DESSERTS

Bye-bye, balloon kid

In *Spider-Man 2* the game, I remember that annoying kid who kept whining about his balloon? "My balloon!" he'd say, and we'd all just cringe. Well, let's just say that kid gets what's coming to him in *Ultimate Spider-Man*, courtesy of your unfriendly neighborhood Venom. Hey, a psychotic symbiote's gotta eat, right?



Best. Tutorial. Ever.

Whether you prefer Twisted Metal-esque carnage or WipeOut-style racing destruction, Jak X has you covered.

The vehicles are pretty customizable, from cosmetic things like paint color and bumper shape to engine tweaks.

There's a whole balance between offensive and defensive weapons, but offensive usually wins.

"EVENTS COME IN TWO MAIN FLAVORS: RACES AND ARENA BATTLES"

FLAT JACKS

Jak X: Combat Racing

Sony's naughty doggies need to heel

Jak X: *Combat Racing* is an accessible entry into the annals of high-speed carnage, but it's a little shallow and short on distinguishing features. The graphics are very good and the voice talent excellent, but the story is D.O.A., and the action itself could use some polish and inspiration.

Events come in two main flavors: races and arena battles. You have the requisite unlockable vehicles, parts upgrades, and power-ups — nothing innovative here, and we really wish the vehicles' handling physics were a little less swishy. The weapons aren't

quite balanced, but this is less of a problem with track racing, which also has tighter controls and fewer camera problems.

Classic racing modes like circuit, deathmatch, time trial, and capture are supplemented by some more interesting new variations. For example, in Turbo Dash races, you collect power cells, which grant you unlimited turbo. However, using that turbo charges up the cell, which can then be launched like a missile at an enemy. Fun. Other PSM favorite modes are Assassin, in which you must kill a specific opponent, and Artifact, which features ran-

PSM SCORE 7.0

DAXTER'S DELIGHT

+Some entertaining games, easy controls, looks solid and preserves Jak's style.

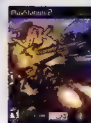
JACKED UP

*Camera and controls aren't as polished as we'd expect, lacks true innovation.

domly generated waypoints.

It's been too long since we had a great vehicular combat game, and *Jak X* delivers some rollicking good multiplayer fun. It just lacks the flair needed to make it a must-buy.

JOE MCNEILLY



JAK X: COMBAT RACING

PUBLISHED BY Sony CEA

MADE BY Naughty Dog

HOW MUCH? \$39.99

ESRB RATING Teen

MULTIPLAYER 2-player online and offline

DIFFICULTY Average

SUPPORTS +Pro Logic II +USB Headset

TAG TEAMED

Crash Tag Team Racing

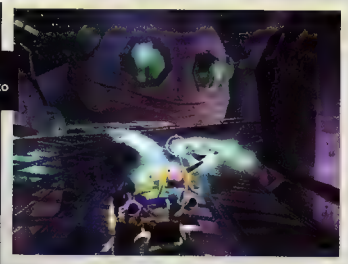
It's better to shoot than drive

Though much of *Crash Tag Team Racing* is standard fare for a platformer or combat racer, there are a couple of well-executed elements. The new Clashing system allows you to combine your car with an opponent's car during the race. Once Clashed, you can choose the gunner or driver's seat, much the way you can in *Mario Kart: Double Dash*. Crash even gets out of the car and explores the amusement park where the game takes place, searching out hidden items and new

characters and vehicles using his trademark, on-foot methods. Mini-games like bowling and target shooting are also available at various booths around the park.

Car controls are generally good, as is track design (hidden elements are cool), but power slides would be much easier with a separate e-brake button. That's okay, 'cause this is no hardcore racing sim. Taking pot shots at the other racers (especially during multiplayer races) is where the real fun lies. **JOE MCNEILLY**

Don't like your ride? No sweat. Just Clash with another vehicle to create a super-rig.



PSM SCORE 6.5

NOT ROOBY

*Lots of cars, tracks, powerups, and mini-games to keep you busy.

PIT STOPS

*Shoddy camera in amusement park mode, lots of clichéd gameplay.

+ PUBLISHED BY Vivendi Universal + MADE BY Radical Etc. + HOW MUCH? \$39.99 + ESRB Everyone + MULTIPLAYER 4-Player Offline, 8-player link + DIFFICULTY Medium + SUPPORTS Pro Logic II, System link

"IS IT POSSIBLE FOR
A GAME TO TRY
TOO HARD TO BE COOL?"

For some reason, no matter what color outfit you've chosen, everything comes out looking gray.

SNOW BORED

SSX On Tour

The sensational series loses its sizzle



SSX ON TOUR

PUBLISHED BY EA

MADE BY EA Canada

HOW MUCH? \$49.99

ESRB RATING Teen

MULTIPLAYER 2-player online and offline

DIFFICULTY Average

SUPPORTS +Pro Logic II +Widescreen

Is it possible for a game to try too hard to be cool? *SSX On Tour*, apparently brought to us by the words "grunge" and "extreme," answers that question with an unfortunate "I guess it is."

The game's high-fivin', air-guitar attitude works fine when you're navigating the goofy front end, full of *Napoleon Dynamite*-style, hand drawn menus, but it falls flat when you hit the slopes.

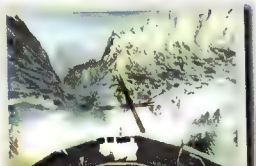
There's a pervading sense of aimlessness here. The basic controls feel as good as ever, but there aren't as many

fun ways to put your tricks to good use. The action quickly gets monotonous because it lacks a solid race structure — you just wander around the mountain choosing events at random. Additionally, the courses have been intentionally left wide open to offer more player freedom — a noble goal, but one which results in a distinct lack of personality for each course.

On Tour even looks drab. It does boast a serious sense of speed — although there are a lot more obstacles to slow you down. Skiing feels almost exactly like snowboarding, like it was



On Tour is technically sound; it just lacks the lively sparkle of the previous *SSX* games.



Yes, you can choose to play as a skier now, though the differences between skis and boards are very, very minor.

thrown in just for the heck of it.

Rough spots aside, *SSX* is still fundamentally fun, with some nice online and multiplayer touches. Overall though, it's a big step backwards from *SSX 3*. **RANDY NELSON**

PSM SCORE 6.5

BIG AIR

+ Great controls, super sense of speed. Customizable player characters.

BIG HAIR

- Weak courses, washed-out graphics, tries too hard to be "cool".

INCREDIBLE ODDS

Conflict: Global Terror

It's you against everybody else in the world

The four timeless warriors from the earlier *Conflict* games are back, only this time they're out to stop drug-sponsored terrorism in Central America.

And that's no mean feat, considering that everyone else in the game is out to skin you alive. With its upgraded enemy AI, *Conflict: Global Terror* presents some very stiff competition. These drug fiends will ambush you, attack from all directions and use tanks and helicopters with deadly accuracy. Let's just say you'll be using a ton of Med-packs...

Conflict: Global Terror can also be

played online in a four-player co-op mode, which should greatly increase the real world of combat feel that this title offers.

One thing that doesn't feel realistic about this game is the incredible odds your team will face. Sure, you have four of the greatest warriors ever assembled, but your enemies number in the thousands. That doesn't sound like a recipe for victory to me. Another enigma is that once you get through an area that was crawling with enemy, you can send a single soldier back and he won't find an enemy soldier anywhere. Very strange. **BILL DONOHUE**



Here's half of your insertion team dealing out the death. Two bad guys down, 400,000 to go...

PSM SCORE 7.5

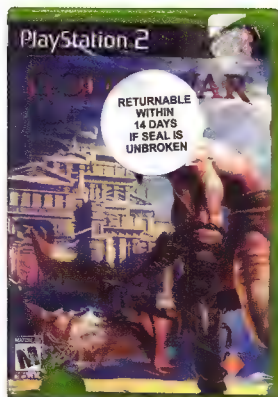
LOCK AND LOAD

+ Great graphics, improved enemy AI, real orders system all contribute.

TAGGED AND GAGGED

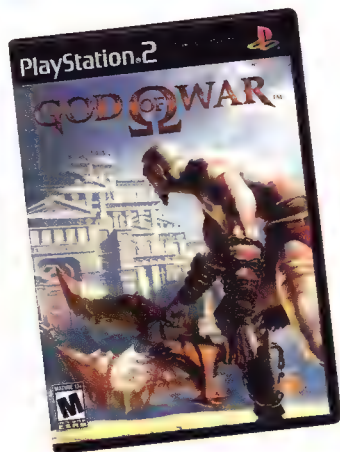
- The ratio of enemy to your guys is unrealistic; you wouldn't have a chance.

+ PUBLISHED BY 2K Games + MADE BY Proletariat Games + HOW MUCH? \$49.99 + ESRB Mature + MULTIPLAYER 4-player co-op + DIFFICULTY 2K + SUPPORTS Online play



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16 Hits

The combat is one of the high points in *Radiata Stories*, a strategic, yet briskly-paced affair.



Somewhere, a mama man-eating giant plant is asking herself where she went wrong in raising her son.

"THANKFULLY THE GAMEPLAY PUSHES A FRESH ANGLE"

QUANTITY OVER QUALITY

Radiata Stories

Beautiful AND a pretty good personality

Personality is what drives some of the more quirky, memorable RPGs to date. And if it ain't got quirk, then it's got gameplay. Weirdly, Square Enix's small-scale, character-packed action RPG, *Radiata Stories*, has samplings on

both ends, but it never succeeds in bringing them together in any convincing way.

You are Jack, a plucky knight in training whose father was a major hero. If you've ever played an RPG before, you can pretty much figure out the gist of where *Radiata Stories* is headed, plot-wise: there's plenty of dark, impending doom and apocalyptic shenanigans.

The game keeps things light as far as storyline. It's your interactions with the game's 175 or so recruitable characters that really drive both the action-oriented gameplay and its sub-



Screw realism. These graphics are gorgeous.

quest heavy structure. Unfortunately, *Radiata's* core charm is hidden under too many layers of lightweight chatter and too little real substance.

Thankfully, the gameplay pushes a fresh angle with increasingly interesting action-style combat (combos and tactics are key) and an incredibly luscious world that looks good enough to bake a cake out of. While the heft of sub-quests, beautiful art and a twist on combat may not dismiss some of the game's minor problems, there's satisfaction to be had in *Radiata's* gameplay. **FRANCESCA REYES**



RADIATA STORIES

PUBLISHED BY Square Enix

MADE BY Tri-Ace

HOW MUCH? \$49.99

ESRB RATING Teen

MULTIPLAYER Nope

DIFFICULTY Pretty Easy

SUPPORTS
+Progressive scan
+Wide screen

PSM SCORE 6.5

FUNNY HA HA

+Loads of characters to recruit and sub-quests to take on; Beautiful.

FUNNY WEIRD

-Kicking and talking buttons should really be switched! Slooooooow-paced story.

HEXAGONS AHOY!

Suikoden Tactics

Like chess, only the pieces kill each other

W

Suikoden Tactics is a tactical RPG that plays like a game of chess, but with a twist: the pieces are characters that can kill each other. The game is set in a world where a great war has just ended, and the survivors are struggling to rebuild their lives. The game is a tactical RPG that plays like a game of chess, but with a twist: the pieces are characters that can kill each other. The game is set in a world where a great war has just ended, and the survivors are struggling to rebuild their lives.

Strategy RPGs rock. Why aren't there more of them?



PSM SCORE 7.0

MASTERMIND

+Excellent graphics, superb acting, rich battle system, big roster of characters.

CHALLENGED

-Plot gets bizarre at times, the *Suikoden IV* or *VI* cast woulda been way cooler.

+ PUBLISHED BY Konami + MADE BY Konami + HOW MUCH? \$39.99 + ESRB Pending + MULTIPLAYER None + DIFFICULTY Not bad + SUPPORTS None

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MOTION DESIGNER MASAKI KOSHIKAWA PRODUCED BY KEISUKE KIKUCHI DIRECTED BY MAKOTO SHIBATA



PlayStation 2



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We're all for evolution, but how to you take the whip out of *Castlevania*? Seems unnatural.

"THE CASTLEVANIA SERIES IS SIMPLY STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP"



The pink, bat-looking critter is one of the "Innocent Devils". They kind of play the Orko role to your He-Man.

BARK AT THE MOON

Castlevania: Curse of Darkness

The curse of one-dimensional gameplay

Let's all say it together: "WTF?" Not only is the main character in *Curse of Darkness* not a Belmont, he wields a sword (or axe, or polearm, whatever other non-whip weapons are handy) instead of a whip as his primary weapon.

That craziness out of the way, *Curse of Darkness* does a lot right. The graphics are gorgeous — though the endless corridors get rather tedious — it has loads of unique weaponry to create and use, and the return of the familiars (little monsters that help out our protagonist, this time called Innocent Devils) will keep you playing.

Sometimes it's a struggle to do,

though. The horrible camera, which struggles to keep up with the action despite a new lock-on feature, is just the start. The main problem is that there's simply nothing to do here other than endlessly hack at waves of ghouls. No platforming elements, no puzzles, nothing to freshen up the action at all. The boss battles aren't even that interesting. If the whole PlayStation 2 world hadn't spent the summer being blown away by Sony's *God of War*, *Curse of Darkness* might have scored higher. But the bar for this type of game is higher now, and it seems the *Castlevania* series is simply struggling to keep up. **GREG SEWART**

CASTLEVANIA: CURSE OF DARKNESS

PUBLISHED BY Konami

MADE BY Konami

HOW MUCH? \$49.99

ESRB RATING Pending

MULTIPLAYER None

DIFFICULTY Average

SUPPORT +Pro Logic II



The graphics are almost universally beautiful, and the design... well, how many other games have skeletons riding dinosaurs?

PSM SCORE 7.0

GOOD

+Great graphics and character design, one of the prettiest game series around.

EVIL

—One-trick-pony gameplay will wear thin for all but devoted *Castlevania* fans.

VIVE LA REVOLUTION

Karaoke Revolution Party

It's a cultural revolution!

It's the party season and you're looking for a way to celebrate. Karaoke Revolution Party is the answer.

Karaoke Revolution Party is a fun and easy-to-use karaoke game that lets you sing along to your favorite songs. The game features a variety of songs from different eras and genres, and it's easy to find the songs you want to sing. The game also features a variety of fun features, such as the ability to sing in different languages and to sing with different instruments. Karaoke Revolution Party is a great way to celebrate the party season and to have fun with your friends and family.



Now you can be Donny Osmond, although why you'd want to be is beyond us.



Can't sing and dance at the same time? Don't worry. If you can do either one or the other, you're still one up on Ashley Simpson.

PSM SCORE 8.5

ON KEY

+The huge song list coupled with the EyeToy make this great fun for all ages.

A BIT FLAT

—The sound-alikes aren't always on key, dance mat support feels too gimmicky.

+PUBLISHED BY Konami + MADE BY Harmonix + HOW MUCH? \$39.99 + ESRB Pending +MULTIPLAYER 6-player party mode + DIFFICULTY Are you tone deaf? + SUPPORTS Voice headset, EyeToy, Dance Mat, USB microphone

RINGTAIL RUMBLE

Sly 3: Honor Among Thieves

Can you say "One More Time?"

Although last year's *Sly 2* focused on action a little too much, *Sly 3: Honor Among Thieves* remembers that this is an action *platforming* series. And it really does the platforming well. When things do get physical, there are tons of new attacks (there are three potency levels for melee strikes now), especially for Bentley in his turbo-charged wheelchair. You'll find several new playable characters too, some of whom were adversaries in previous games.

Raccoon-ish 3D glasses — included in the box — liven up the saturated cel-shaded graphics in short sequences, and although many of the action segments aren't as perfectly tuned as those in a *Ratchet & Clank* game, the sheer variety of the shenanigans makes up for it.

In fact, this variety even overcomes Sly's only real offense: as with *Tony Hawk*, *Dynasty Warriors*, *Jak* and more, the games come out so often that it's hard to avoid a "been there and done that" feeling. That said, *Sly 3* is still a winner.

JOHN BRANDON

PSM 8.0
SCORE

HOUSE PET

★Tons of gameplay improvements and variety; platform segments are back.

ROAD KILL

—Under-13 storyline, even with all the new stuff, barely avoids feeling too staid.

We'll admit that three games in three years leaves us with a slight "been there, done that" feeling, but this is one solidly built offering.

PSM
BUY
ORDIE!



**SLY 3: HONOR
AMONG THIEVES**

PUBLISHED BY
Sony CEA

MADE BY
Sucker Punch

HOW MUCH?
\$39.99

ESRB RATING
Everyone

MULTIPLAYER
2 player split screen

DIFFICULTY
Average

SUPPORT
★Pro Logic II
★Splitscreen multiplayer



Combat, platforming, rhythm action, naval warfare, racing ... there's a wide variety of gameplay types all crammed into one game, here.



GAME OVER

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The game plays fine and everything... there's just nothing new or deep or strategic about it.
 @@@@...



Devil Kings

The new king lacks ambition

Koei's *Dynasty Warriors* has been a huge success this generation, so it's no surprise Capcom is taking its own shot, adding a bit of *Devil May Cry* fruit-factor to DW's mindless enemy slashing. Truly, the six characters are more exotic than those in DW, but it's not enough to give the game an identity of its own.

It looks nice enough. The graphics run at a smooth 60 frames and never slow down, and it's often fun just to wade in and decimate hordes in ridiculous fashion. Each character can level-up and learn a few new moves, but combat is mostly just hitting @ a few thousand times per battle. Despite

some neat level scenarios, that gets old fast. It's also easy to die in the space of seconds, losing a half-hour's progress in one vein-throbbing instant.

Devil Kings is fine for what it is: a decent rental, but you'll want to think carefully before swearing long-term allegiance to this monarch.

BENJAMIN TURNER



KING

★When you gotta slay 2000 dudes in an hour, *Devil Kings* happily obliges.

SELF

★Hours of uninspired button-smashing, punctuated by occasional sudden deaths.

DOG LIKE ME



Using Wallace's inventions is nice — especially the "Bungun", which greatly resembles *Ratchet & Clank's* Suck Cannon.

Wallace & Gromit: Curse of the Were-Rabbit

Based on the animated duo's new movie, *Curse of the Were-Rabbit* finds Wallace and Gromit working to rid vegetable gardens of pests like rabbits and squirrels... and, if the moon is out, were-critters.

The game is a large action-adventure-exploration-puzzle affair. There are many kinds of gameplay, but the main action is herding large numbers of critters into Wallace's "vortex" traps. While this is certainly unique — and not just because I've never battled a were-critter before — it gets tedious, and the game is glacially paced. Ultimately the game never quite captures enough of Wallace and Gromit's charm to overcome these problems over its 16-20 hours. **JUST LONDON**



HAPPY-HOPPTY

★Nice graphics, some unique gameplay, plus the occasional honest laugh.

FLOPPY-FLOPPY

★Slowly paced, frustrating, and it wears out its welcome well before it's done.

PUBLISHED BY Konami MADE BY Frontier
 HOW MUCH? \$39.99 + ESRB RATING Everyone
 MULTIPLAYER Two-player co-op
 DIFFICULTY Herding cats + SUPPORTS None

QUICK HITS! ?

Without Warning

This clunky, third-person shooter really wishes it was *007: Everything or Nothing*. The difference is that aiming your weapon takes at most two seconds in *007*, while the same thing in *Without Warning* requires more patience than reading *The Da Vinci Code* in Pig Latin. The enemies take crazy damage before dropping, too. This is a game that's tough to play simply because it's poorly made. Top it off with bad graphics and generic, "2D" wannabe story and design, and you've got a game that potential players need to be warned about. **DAVID MCCUTCHEON**



You've played this type of thing before, and it was way better then.



WITH

★Multiple characters; puzzles break up the constant, sedately flawed action.

WITHOUT

★Bad design, with mediocre action, voice acting, and bland missions.

PUBLISHED BY Capcom + MADE BY Circle Studios + HOW MUCH? \$39.99
 ESRB RATING Mature + MULTIPLAYER No + DIFFICULTY Cheap deathfest + SUPPORTS Nothing

Suzuki TT Superbikes

Like Namco's *Moto GP* series, this meticulous two-wheeled racer is a niche title, but motorcycle freaks will absolutely love it. The game's various road courses are amazingly authentic, and the racing is both scary and thrilling, yet maddeningly difficult on "expert." Arcade mode lets you jump into the thick of things on any bike you choose, while challenge mode starts you out a beater and lets you upgrade as you progress through the various classes. Graphics are average, and the physics are impressive, though road times are excruciatingly long. Luckily, the racing makes it worth the wait. **JOHN NORDEN**



For a more realistic experience, you can use this "cockpit" view.



WHEELIE

★Plenty of racing options, customizable bikes, awesome racing, cheap.

HIGHSIDE

★Long load times, so-so graphics, no online mode so you can take on a buddy.

PUBLISHED BY Valcon Games + MADE BY Jester + HOW MUCH? \$19.99 + ESRB RATING Everyone + MULTIPLAYER 2 player split screen + DIFFICULTY Hard + SUPPORTS Online multiplayer

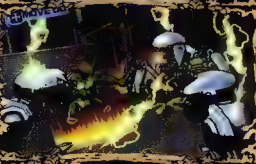


NOTHING MAKES A TURTLE EVOLVE FASTER THAN THE THREAT OF EXTINCTION

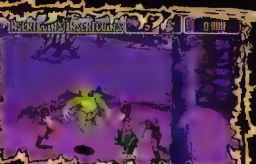
To survive this nightmare, the Turtles will have to take it to a whole new level. The more enemies they defeat, the more powerful the Turtles become, picking up all new weapons, ultimate moves and even mystic markings along the way. And as a bonus, you get the classic Turtles in Time game. When the going gets tough, these Turtles get tougher.



MUTATE YOUR TURTLE



4-PLAYER COOPERATIVE ATTACK



UNLOCK TURTLES IN TIME



PlayStation 2



NINTENDO DS



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Oh, he'll catch the pass, but that's not as important as the gratuitous violence or cursing that's soon to follow.



HIT THE CHEAT BUTTON

Blitz: The League

Football for people who aren't good at football

For every die-hard, know it all Madden player out there, there are probably 3 or 4 folks who don't know anything about football except that they like to run around, tackle people and trash talk.

Oh, there's plenty of 'football' action here: there are run plays and pass plays. Unfortunately, these are sandwiched in between gratuitous, Ebonics-laden cutscenes, salacious cheerleader routines, boring repetitive commentary and the occasional nude streaker.

In a move to eliminate any kind of skill from the kicking game, Midway has replaced the power and accuracy scheme with a button mashing frenzy.

Let's not forget the Clash Juice, or as I call it, the Cheat Button. Boggled down during a kick return? Use your Clash juice and everyone around you slows to a crawl, allowing you to get a hundred yard return every time. And you can use it pretty much any time. This is football for people who don't like football — which is rather pointless. **BILL DONOHUE**

PSM

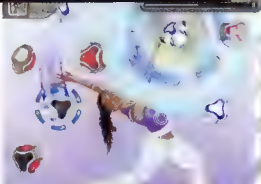
SCORE

6.0

- FIRST DOWN**

 - + Action is frenetic, stadia are beautiful, nice weather effects, sexy cheerleaders.
- FALL DOWN**

 - Unnecessary cutscenes and language, Clash juice breaks the game.



Kinetic takes a pleasingly game-oriented approach to exercise ... but this screen is still bogus as hell.

EyeToy: Kinetic

Much like *Yoursell!Fitness* (PSM 98), this is actually a workout program in the guise of a game. *EyeToy: Kinetic* consists of two modes: Trainer Mode, in which a virtual trainer leads you through a 12-week fitness course, and Routine Builder, in which you construct a workout yourself.

There are plenty of activities, from cardio to toning to yoga-style "holistic" moves. The program does a good job of making a game out of the exercises, but *Yoursell!Fitness* is a much more robust and adaptive fitness package. Also, be warned that it comes with a wide-angle lens to make you appear smaller onscreen, but which makes it tough to focus in a small-to-medium sized room.

ERIC BRATCHER

PSM

SCORE

6.5

- MR. UNIVERSE**

 - + This title somewhat makes exercise tolerable by making a game out of it.
- PSN STAFFER**

 - Tough to focus, not as deep as non-EyeToy alternative, still exercise.

PUBLISHED AND MADE BY Sony
 HOW MUCH? \$29.99 + ESRB RATING Everyone
 MULTIPLAYER None
 DIFFICULTY N/A + SUPPORTS EyeToy



BLITZ: THE LEAGUE

PUBLISHED BY Midway

MADE BY Midway Chicago

HOW MUCH +\$39.95

ESRB RATING Mature

MULTIPLAYER Two-player online and offline

DIFFICULTY Variable, but easy

SUPPORTS + Pro Logic II + Widescreen + Voice Headset

QUICK HITS

Gretzky NHL 2006

What a letdown! After taking a strong step in the right direction last year, *Gretzky '06* hits the ice as a flawed, low-quality effort that completely misses the net.

Problems include the default camera, which is seizure-inducing and doesn't let you see who's around to pass the puck to; crappy animation; pathetic collision-detection between multiple players; and even individual players and the rink, an abundance of soft goals, and most puzzling of all, at least nine out of every ten scores will clang in off a post. Ice is cold, but this game is colder.

RYAN MCCAFFREY



Honestly, what happened? This series was headed for the playoffs, but now, we're shocked the players can even skate.

PSM

SCORE

5.0

- STANLEY CUP**

 - + Some good presentation elements; pioneered the target shot-aligning system.
- ATHLETIC CUP**

 - Default camera angle; robotic commentary; cheap goals; choppy animation.

PUBLISHED BY Sony CE + MADE BY Sega 4 Studios + HOW MUCH? \$39.99 + DIFFICULTY Varies + ESRB RATING E10+ + MULTIPLAYER 2 online, 8 off + SUPPORTS Pro Logic II, EyeToy, headset

World Series of Poker

On the plus side, *World Series of Poker's* single player, Career mode opponent AI is hell of a tough. There are also lots of online play modes, and even the option of nooping up an EyeToy camera so all the online opponents can see each other.

However, there are at least two pending PS2 alternatives, and if you're buying this for online play, there are dozens of PC poker games available online, and many are free. The one thing a console version might offer — production value — is sorta missing. The graphics are pretty awful. This is cheap, but not cheap enough.

JEFF LUNDRIAN



Lenny had a weak stomach, so the Buffalo Wings were a bad idea...

PSM

SCORE

5.0

- FLUSH**

 - + Demanding AI in the single player mode, plus some interesting online options.
- BROKE**

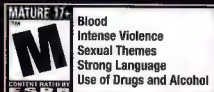
 - Not so nice to look and, poorly animated, and ultimately kind of pointless.

PUBLISHED BY Activision Value + MADE BY Left Field + HOW MUCH? \$29.99 + ESRB RATING Everyone + MULTIPLAYER Yes + DIFFICULTY Hard + SUPPORTS EyeToy, Online play

THE WARRIORS

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PlayStation 2



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"THERE ARE 75 WEAPONS AND 30 DIFFERENT MILITARY-THEMED VEHICLES. WOW!"

BALL-BUSTING SHOOTER

Theater of war arcade shooter with seriously huge maps

also includes a 24-person online multiplayer mode similar to the PC *Battlefield* games. First, you pick a troop type (assault, special ops, sniper, or engineer), then it's all out war in massive, theatre-style maps. That's a bonus wow. **JOHN BRANDON**

PSM SCORE **8.5**

✦ Frame rate chugs along like oil soup, far from the prettiest game on the planet.

QUICK HITS

TMNT 3: Mutant Nightmare

The stylized art design just keeps getting better, but the gameplay is going

PSM SCORE 5.0

✦Lack of variety in gameplay will leave you wanting something better.

† PUBLISHED AND MADE BY Konami † HOW MUCH? \$29.99 † ESRB RATING Everyone
† MULTIPLAYER 2-4 players offline † DIFFICULTY Adjustable † SUPPORTS Offline Multiplayer

Disney's Chicken Little

There is decent gameplay variety, though the bulk is still platforming.

PSM SCORE 5.5

✦ You've played this sort of thing before, many, many, many times.

† PUBLISHED BY Buena Vista † MADE BY Avalanche † HOW MUCH? \$39.99 † ESRB RATING Everyone † MULTIPLAYER 2 player co-op, versus † DIFFICULTY Easy to Average † SUPPORTS None



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Violence

AVAILABLE NOW



AVAILABLE NOW
PlayStation.2



Use of Alcohol
Violence

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"THE FIRST REAL — AS IN FULLY FEATURED AND LEGITIMATE — PORTABLE FOOTBALL GAME"



MADDEN NFL 2006

EA GAMES

MADDEN NFL 2006

PUBLISHED BY EA

MADE BY Tiburon

HOW MUCH? \$49.99

ESRB RATING Everyone

MULTIPLAYER 2-4 players

DIFFICULTY Adjustable

SUPPORT +Pro Logic II +PS2 Connectivity

+2 player Ad hoc and infrastructure

multiplay, 4 player pass-the-PSP

Graphics are predictably weak, but gameplay is port perfect.



NO FOOTBALL LOST

Madden NFL 2006

Portable pigskin to be proud of

Put simply, *Madden 2006* for PSP is the first real — as in, fully featured and legitimate — portable football game. Yes, the graphics aren't quite as smooth and detailed as the PS2 version, and sure, game modes are confined to 18 (!) mini-games, exhibition mode, a slightly stripped-down franchise mode, and wireless multiplayer, but *Madden* for PSP feels almost exactly like the big brother PS2 version (right down to the commentary). Which, when you really think about it, is a pretty massive accom-

plishment. Right away, you'll notice that the analog stick actually gives you more — not less — control over your running back than you'd expect. It's awesome.

True some features have been stripped out, but not as many as you might expect. There's no QB Vision (or any other right stick moves), but you do get precision passing, which enables you to place the ball where only your receiver can catch it. You can also play full one-on-one games over the real internet — supposedly. This wasn't ready in time for our



No QB Vision, but then some Madden players didn't like it anyway.



The truck stick may be missing, but the left stick controls are as tight and fluid as the full-sized version.

review, but EA has promised that it'll be there in the final, boxed version. You can also hook up the PSP to your PS2 and move your franchise saved game back and forth. **JOHN BRANDON**

PSM 8.5

FIELD GOAL

+Controls mostly well, feels like the big *Madden*, sans right-stick and QB vision.

FLAG

—No career mode, graphics take a hit, no QB vision (no right stick, you know?)

WHAM, BAM, SLAM!

NBA Live 06

Hot handheld hoops

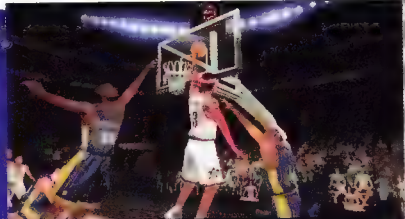
Hey, NBA fan? You don't need to wonder why you bought a PSP any more. *NBA Live* is here to make you feel better.

Indeed, the PSP hoopster's veritable knight in white sneakers is *NBA Live*'s handheld debut. It's shocking how much *Live* goodness — meaning the tight control — they squeezed into the single-stick portable, but we're stoked.

Free-wheelin' Freestyle controls are out, but @ executes crossovers (tap), power dribbles, and pro hops (hold). Freestyle superstar moves are in (← plus a face button) and they're just as impressive on the small screen. The biggest

bummer is the attrition of two shot buttons back into one (Ⓢ), but it proves tolerable, as the game does a good job of deciding whether to shoot or dunk.

Throw in full All-Star Weekend (yes, the dunk contest still rocks sans right stick), scenario-style challenges for unlockable goodies, and smooth, excellent graphics, and you've got a hoops king that will be tough to dethrone. **RYAN MCCAFFREY**



NBA Live 06 is good enough to make you forget all about that other NBA game that stunk up the PSP launch.

PSM 9.0

GEL INSOLES

+Top-notch control; killer graphics; plenty o' game modes; fun as hell.

ATHLETE'S FOOT

—Occasional replay weirdness; limited commentary; default camera sucks.

+PUBLISHED BY EA Sports + MADE BY EA Canada + HOW MUCH? \$49.99 + ESRB Everyone + MULTIPLAYER 2-player Ad-hoc + DIFFICULTY Adjustable + SUPPORTS Ad-hoc multiplay



**My gamer fragged
your honor student.**

PROUD PAPA?

Video games aren't just kid's stuff anymore. The whole family's grabbing for the controller. Drop by Game Crazy for the latest and greatest on all things game. Bring your granny.

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PSP

"VIRTUA TENNIS: WORLD TOUR IS FANTASTIC"

COM COM 0
1P COM 15

LOVE THE LUV

Playing doubles with an AI partner is a great way to learn how to work with a teammate in the awesome Ad-Hoc multiplayer mode.

SPEED

Virtua Tennis: World Tour

PSM BUY OR DIE

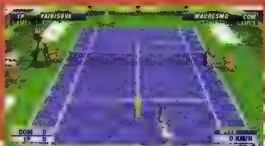
If only real tennis was this much fun

Who would have thought when Sega launched the stellar *Virtua Tennis* on Dreamcast back in 2000 that the series would one day play brilliantly on a portable Sony console? Nobody! Yet, here we are in late 2005 and *Virtua Tennis: World Tour* is fantastic.

There's not even a tennis game on PS2 this good. *Smash Court* is too technical, *Top Spin* is too easy, *Outlaw Tennis* is too unpolished, and *Sega Sports Tennis* doesn't look this good. *Virtua Tennis* has the perfect balance of depth, challenge, and simple playabil-

ity. It's almost impossible to put down.

There are 16 pros (eight guys, eight gals), and you can play singles or doubles. Modes include Quick match, Exhibition, Tournament, mini-games, and World Tour. This last one starts you off with two poorly skilled players, one male and one female, and challenges you to play mini-games, build their stats, and start making tournament money. This is the only unbalanced area of the game, as some stat-building games are much harder than others. However, a brilliant 2-4 player Ad-Hoc mode makes up for it. This game is awesome. **ERIC BRATCHER**



What you don't see here is how smoothly the players animate, how the clouds overhead cast shadows on the court, or the judge speaking in German — don't know why we selected that option, but it's funny.



You start off in World Tour mode as a near-talentless hack, but eventually you get the skills to take on the pros.

PSM SCORE 9.0

IN

Controls like a dream, looks great, the perfect blend of arcade and sim.

OUT

Mini-games need balancing, begs for true online multiplayer mode.

QUICK HITS

PSP

Armored Core Formula Front Extreme Battle

There's a reason Age of Empires Extreme Battle is the most popular PC game of the year: It's a damn good game.

It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one.

It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one.



Formula Front looks good, though we wish there was more feedback telling you what did and didn't work after a loss.

PSM SCORE 6.5

ROBOT

Looks good. It's deep, with as many parts as the full-sized version.

LOBOT

Chunky controls and targeting, best for gear-heads, not action gamers.

➤ PUBLISHED BY Age of Empires ➤ MADE BY From Software ➤ HOW MUCH? \$39.99 ➤ ESRB RATING Teen ➤ MULTIPLAYER Two-player Ad-hoc ➤ DIFFICULTY Hard ➤ SUPPORTS Ad-hoc multiplayer

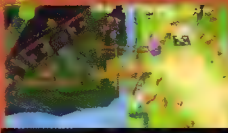
Frogger: Helmet Chaos

PSP

Ever tried to drag a box around by your tongue? Some things are better left to the experts. In *Frogger: Helmet Chaos*, you're a frog.

It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one.

It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one. It's a real-time strategy game, and it's a damn good one.



Look out! There's more of that deadly water straight ahead!!!

PSM SCORE 6.0

HOPPY

Controls and gameplay make this feel like a true spiritual successor.

BUGGY

Repetitive stress from constantly pressing buttons to move Frogger.

➤ PUBLISHED BY Konami ➤ MADE BY Konami ➤ HOW MUCH? \$29.99 ➤ ESRB RATING Everyone ➤ MULTIPLAYER 1-4 players Ad-hoc Wi-Fi ➤ DIFFICULTY Easy ➤ SUPPORTS Ad-hoc Wi-Fi multiplayer

"Locked and loaded for a slick sequel to last year's paintball hit."

IGN.com

U-REAL, RAPPER AND 'BALLER

ONE HIT,
YOU'RE
DEAD

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BUILD YOUR FIELD Place, rotate and scale obstacles for an almost infinite number of field layouts. Then upload and play your fields online—custom style.



CONTROL YOUR TEAM The innovative Breakout Manager lets you direct your teammates' moves and shooting—control your team, control the field.



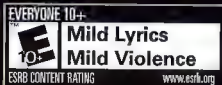
GAME BOY ADVANCE

NINTENDO DS



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SHARP!

Resident Evil 4 Chainsaw Controller

Just perfect for those movable feasts...

Like most novelty controllers (for instance, *FFX-2*'s Tiny Bee guns), the *RE4* chainsaw — which comes in a beautiful case and has “blood” hand-spattered on it, so each one is unique — is meant as more of a display piece than it is an actual controller. However, it does really work. The player grasps it by the handles, and other than the left stick being slightly further away than usual, the four shoulder buttons being moved to trigger and side-mounted positions (easily tapped with your middle fingers, believe it or not), and the start button being tough to reach (that one’s a bummer), it’s business as usual.

Well, not exactly usual. The pull-cord on the PS2 version works; it’s a second button and triggers both a rumbling and a priceless chain saw sound effect. Plus, there’s an internal switch that tracks whether you’re holding the controller level or angled up or down. If you hold it level, the

It's not perfect as a controller, but as a novelty and collector's item, this thing is fantastic.

“COMES IN A BEAUTIFUL CASE AND HAS ‘BLOOD’ HAND-SPATTERED ON IT”

saw acts as if you’re holding **□** – Leon plants his feet and readies his weapon. Pointing the saw up or down “releases” **□** and he goes mobile again. This is a neat touch, but we wish it could be switched off — it’s a little tricky to work the sticks while holding the controller at an angle. **ERIC BRATCHER**

LIMITED EDITION RE 4 CHAINSAW CONTROLLER

MADE BY Nuby
HOW MUCH? +\$59.99

PSM SCORE 7.5

REVVED UP

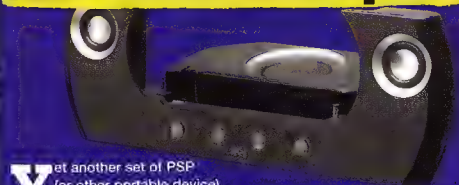
✦ Makes fun noise, actually works as a controller, looks great... it's bloody!

OUTTA GAS

– Holding by the handle makes it tough to hit start quickly when you need to.

HANDS ON

Mini-Theater Sound System



Yet another set of PSP (or other portable device) speakers? Yeah, but this one has the best sound we’ve yet heard.

It’s obvious why — this unit’s base houses a ported, 2 1/4-inch subwoofer. That equals more, better boom. The stereo surround is top-notch, too.

There’s still a notable hum during quiet moments (can’t anybody properly control the wiring in these things?) and the

weird shape makes it tough to hit your PSP’s power button and to remove your PSP without touching the precious screen. If you want the best sound, however, this is the best choice so far. **ERIC BRATCHER**

PSM SCORE 7.5

JAWBITY

✦ Great sound, with tauter bass response; carrying pouch can hold extra stuff.

CHAWBITY

✦ Annoying buzz when there’s not much sound, getting your PSP out ain’t easy.

MADE BY Logic 3 • HOW MUCH? \$79.99

PSM BUY OR DIE!

Intec PSP Recharging Dock



Some peripherals are brilliant in their simplicity. Intec’s Recharging Dock consists of two basic pieces: a plain, plastic cradle that holds your PSP and a three-headed, four-foot-long USB cable that has both a PSP-shaped USB

connector and a PSP power plug on one end. Thus, you can now recharge your PSP battery via any USB port on any computer you can find. In fact, because the cord uses the standard PSP power plug, you needn’t even use the cradle — I love that. I can USB-charge my PSP without taking it out of my Nyko Charger Case. Buy this, man.

ERIC BRATCHER

PSM SCORE 8.5

CHARGED!

✦ Here’s some additional versatility for charging up your PSP battery.

DEAD

– We’d gladly pay another dollar for three more feet of cord.

MADE BY Intec • HOW MUCH? \$9.99

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PRODUCED BY ANDREW McALPINE DIRECTED BY STUART DRYBURGH EDITED BY TOM ROSENBERG PRODUCTION DESIGNER VAN TOFFLER EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS GALE ANNE HORN DAVID GALE GARY LUCKHESSE GREG GOODMAN

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COMING SOON TO THEATRES

It may have begun development as a *Deus Ex* shooter, but this fps was strong enough to break away and live on its own. Yes, it was short, but the graphics were pretty, the firefights were tense, and the wild arsenal of sci-fi powers and weapons, including guided fletchettes and portable energy shields, made the multiplayer matches something to remember.

Project: Snowblind. Have you seen it?

RANK	NAME	SCORE	ISS
187	Ride or Die.....	7.5	10
	Arm Combat 3: TUW.....	9.5	9
	Alan Horn.....	8.5	9
	Age Escape.....	8.5	9
	Apache Escape: On The Loose (PSP).....	6.5	9
	Archer MacLaren: Mercury (PSP).....	7.5	9
	Arm Assault 2: End of Days.....	6.5	10
	Armored Core: Nine Breaker.....	6	102
	Atari Anthology.....	8	9
	Asterix: The Great Quest.....	8.5	9
	Atari Offroad Fury 3.....	8	9
	Atari Off Road Fury BT (PSP).....	7.5	9
	Backyard Wrestling 2: There Goes My Name.....	6.5	10
	The Bard's Tale.....	8	9
	Batman Begins.....	6	101
	Battle Assault 3: FOG.....	7	102
	Blade: The Vampire's Vengeance.....	7.5	102
	Big Mutha Truckers 2: TMH.....	5.5	102
	BloodRayne 2.....	7.5	92
	BloodRayne 2: The Final Chapter.....	7.5	92
	Burnout Legends (PSP).....	8.5	103
	Burnout: Revenge.....	9	103
	Call Of Duty: Finest Hour.....	7	103
	Champion: The Road To Glory.....	7.5	103
	Colossus: Road To Freedom.....	6	101
	Compton Fighting Evolution.....	7.5	92
	Conan: The Barbarian.....	7	103
	Charlie & The Chocolate Factory.....	4.5	102
	Coddid Arms (PSP).....	7	100
	Cold Fear.....	8	97
	Cold Winter.....	6.5	98
	Constantine.....	6	97
	Crash 'N' Burn.....	6.5	92
	Crash: The Nunchucks Trilogy (PSP).....	7.5	103
	Darkwatch.....	8	101
	DDR Extreme 2.....	6	103
	Dead To Rights II.....	7	98
	Disciples: Chronicles II (PSP).....	7.5	98
	Death By Degrees.....	7.5	94
	Death Jr. (PSP).....	7.5	101
	Delta Force: Black Hawk Down.....	6.5	103
	Destroy All Humans.....	8	99
	Digimon World 4.....	4	101
	Crash Bandicoot: Twinsanity.....	6	98
	Drive My Car.....	7.5	98
	D.I.C.E.....	5	103
	Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 3.....	6	93
	Dragon Ball Z: End of Days.....	5	98

CLIP NAME	SCORE	ISS
Flame: Ultimate Pinball	7.5	100
FRANTZ (PSP)	7	103
Flame: On A Shadow	6.5	103
Flame: The Architect & Broken Angel	6.5	103
Full Spectrum Warrior 2: CCE	6.5	102
Full Spectrum Warrior	7	98
Genji: Dawn of the Samurai	7	101
Get On Da Mic	7	92
Ghost In The Shell: SAC	7	92
God Racer 2	6.5	94
God Of War	9.5	97
Godzilla: Save The Earth	7.5	93
GoldenEye: Darker	7.5	92
Griffin Kingdom	6.5	92
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	10	93
Gun Tenders: Black Monday	6.5	92
Gutzky NHL 2005	7	92
Gutzky NHL (PSP)	6.5	98
GripShift (PSP)	6	103
GrooveStar: Generation	6.5	93
Gully Gang: Izuka	6.5	98
Hunting Ground	7.5	92
Hyperbolic: Open The PSP	6.5	93
The Incredibles	8	93
Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction	7	101
Irony: Prohecy	6.5	103
Irony: The Group	7.5	92
InuYasha: Feudal Combat	6.5	103
Inuyasha: ROTCM	6	93
Inuyasha: TVG	7	92
Karaoke: Selection Vol. 3	8.5	92
Kasson II	8	96
Killer 7	7.5	100
Klonoa	7.5	96
King Arthur	3.5	92
King Of Fighters: 02/03	7	94
Koon	7.5	96
Legend of a King	6	102
LEGO Star Wars: TVG	7	92
Leisure Suit Lenny: MGL	7	92
Lifez: The Time Machine	7	92
Lumines (PSP)	8.5	97
Madagascar	8	102
Madagascar: NTF	8	101
Madal Kingdom	8	102
Madal Hennes: Rott	6.5	103
Madal Hennes: Rott (PSP)	6.5	103
Marvel Of Honor: EA	8	101

MacEvil: The Corruption (PSP)	7	103
Mad Max X8		
Mercenaries	8	94
METAL GEAR ACID (PSP)	8	87
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	10	83
Metal Gear Solid 4: The Tears of Heaven	9	83
Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition	9.5	98
Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition (PSP)	6.5	101
Midway Arcade Treasures 3	8	103
MLB 2K5	7.5	96
MLB 2006	8.5	96
MLB 2007	8.5	96
Mobile Suit Gundam: GZVZ	7	101
Mobile Suit Gundam Seed: NET	6.5	103
Musashi Samurai Legend	6	98
MVP Baseball 2005	9	96
MVP Baseball (PSP)	7	100
NX vs. ATV Unleashed	9	98
Namco Museum 50th Anniversary	8	103

NAME	SCORE
Namco Museum Battle (PSP)	8. 103
Namobreaker	8. 102
NARC	8. 106
NASCAR 06: TTC	8. 95
NBA 2K6	7.5. 103
NBA Live 06	6.5. 103
NBA PSP	6.5. 98
NBA Street Showdown	7.5. 99
NBA Street X3	8.5. 95
NBA Street X3 Unlimited	10. 100
NCAA March Madness '05	8.5. 92
NCAA March Madness '06	8. 103
Need For Speed (PSP)	6.5. 95
Night Stalker	6.5. 92
NHL Underground 2	8. 92
NHL Street 2	8. 93
NHL Street 3: Unleashed	6.5. 92
NHL 06	8.5. 101
NHL 2K6	7. 103
Nightmare Before Christmas	7.5. 103
On Your Mark	8. 99
One Piece: Grand Battle	7.5. 103
Outlaw Golf 2	7. 92
Outlaw Golf 3	7. 92
Outlaw Volleyball: Remixed	7. 100
Pinball Hall Of Fame	7.5. 94
Playboy: The Mansion	7. 96
Playboy: The Mansion: Collector's Edition	8. 99
Prince Of Persia: Warrior Within	10. 91
One Piece: Unlimited	9. 100
Pump It Up: Snowboard	8. 102
The Punisher	8. 94
Rainbow 6: Lockdown	7.5. 102
Red Ninja: End Of Honor	7. 92
Rengoku: Tower Of Purgatory #2	6.5. 95
Resident Evil: Outbreak (PSP)	5.5. 96
Ricochet	8.5. 98
Rise of The Kasai	8. 97
Robots	8. 97
Rover Legends	7.5. 91
Romance of the 3 Kingdoms 3	7. 100
RPQ Maker 3	7. 100
Rugby 2005	6.5. 96
Rumble Roses: JEL	8. 92
Sacred: Warriors: Jung	8. 92
Sacred: Warriors	6.5. 99
Sealer	6.5. 99
Scorpy-Doo: Unmasked	6.5. 93
SD Gundam Force: SD	5.5. 81
Sega Classics	4. 95
Sega Superstars	6.5. 97
Shadow Of Rome	7.5. 93
Shark Tale	6.5. 92
Shin Megami Tensei	5.5. 90
Shin Megami Tensei: DDS 2	8. 99
Shin Megami Tensei: DDS 3	8. 103
Shin Megami Tensei: Nocturne	7.5. 99
Shining Tears	8. 99
S.L.A.I.	7.5. 103
Smart Bomb (PSP)	6.0. 99
Sonic City	6.5. 99
Sonic Mega Collection Plus	7. 93
Spartan: Total War	7. 103
Spartan-Men 2: Blood War	6.5. 92
Splitter Cell Chaos Theory	8.5. 97
Spongoball Heroes	6.5. 92
Spyro: A Hero's Tail	6.5. 92
Star Ocean TIEGT	7.5. 91
Star Wars Episode III: ROTD	5.5. 100
Stalin Deeds: The Game of Eternity	6.5. 98
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed	7.5. 99
The Suffering: Ties That Bind	7.5. 103
Sukikiden IV	6.5. 94
Super Monkey Ball Deluxe	8.5. 96
Talkie Drum Masters	7.5. 92
2 to 3: Staff of Dreams	6. 92
Technic Beat	8. 91
Tenacious 4	8. 97
Tenchu: Fatal Shadows	8. 95

Start Drive: Eye of Destruction	8	.91
THUG 2: World Destruction Tour	8	.91
THUG 2: World Destruction Tour	8	.91
THUG 2: World Destruction Tour	7.5	.98
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06	9	1.03
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06 (PSP)	9	1.03
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06 (PSP)	9	1.03
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06 (PSP)	9	1.03
TMNT2: Battle Nexus	5	.91
TMNT2: Battle Nexus	5	.91
TMNT2: Battle Nexus	5	.91
Top Spin 3	7.5	.91
Top Spin 3	7.5	.91
Twisted Metal: Head-on (PSP)	6.5	.97
Twisted Metal: Head-on (PSP)	6.5	.97
Twisted Metal: Head-on (PSP)	6.5	.97
The Usanian Tiger 3	6.5	1.03
Untied Legends: BOTB (PSP)	7.5	.97
Untied Legends: BOTB (PSP)	7.5	.97
Untied Legends: BOTB (PSP)	7.5	.97
The Urbz	8	.92
Vietcong: Purple Haze	6	.92
Vietcong: Purple Haze	6	.92
Vietcong: Purple Haze	6	.92
Virtus Quest	3	.93
We Low Katanami	6	.95
Winning Eleven 8	6.5	.95
Wipeout Pure (PSP)	9	.97
World Championship Poker	7	.94
World Championship Poker	7	.94
World Championship Poker	7	.94
World Tour Soccer 2006	7	.96
World Tour Soccer 2006	7	.96
World Tour Soccer 2006	7	.96
Worms Fort Under Siege!	7	.98
Worms Fort Under Siege!	7	.98
X-Men Legends	7.5	.92
X-Men Legends	7.5	.92
X-Men Legends	7.5	.92
Yu-Gi-Oh! The Naphtamin	8	.95
Yu-Gi-Oh! The Naphtamin	8	.95
Yu-Gi-Oh! The Naphtamin	8	.95
Yu-Gi-Oh! CMC	6.5	.83
Yu-Gi-Oh! CMC	6.5	.83
Yu-Gi-Oh! CMC	6.5	.83

By Ed Rue,
Internet Dweller

There are plenty of games that get tons of respect. There are also plenty of games that get almost no respect at all, some of which rock, at least in the opinions of readers like our boy, Ed here, who is either a gangsta or hideously deformed.



The casket as a
is sweet, and th
that the whole



David Duchovny? Eve?
First-Person Shooting.

action? A great mix of stealth action and FPS action, in the form of a



This game was creepy; the vari-

ghouls you had
with in each lev
their relentless
you really made



Using voice commands to control your character? It's

like you're Tank from "The Matrix", only that hot, nerdy chick from *She Spies* is doing your bidding.



Who doesn't want to experience a day



in the life of a samurai? As long as it's "Seppuku Day",



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For **Chris Slate**, videogames aren't just a job — they're also a great way to impose your iron will upon your humble subjects. Thus, every month the PSM editors enter the **THUNDERDROME** to prove that they have what it takes to call themselves hardcore... and to appease Chris, who is also fond of telling us about the "good old days" back when he and his imaginary friend Bobo the bear cub used to play canasta in his tree house.

THIS MONTH'S COMBATANTS
Chris & Randy vs. Bobo the Bear



PSM THUNDERDROME!

This Month: Star Wars Battlefront II

Chris: To me, all who hunger for more Thunderdrome! And the rest of you lay-z-boys come here too, 'cause The Great Slate knows Justin was about to make some wisecrack about how he just had lunch and is no longer hungry.

Randy: Hey, so did I! Wait — you were with us. Don't you remember? KFC?

Chris: Never mind. It is time once again for the Thunderdrome!

Eric: Hey, we are going to finish last month's contest? 'Cause I'm pretty sure I was ahead until Bill made us get back to work. Hey, remember when you tried to pull rank and boss him around? You sure looked funny with Bill's baseball bat sticking out of...

Chris: Enough! You were the winner last month. Now, let us never speak of it again! This month's game is: Star Wars Battlefront II!

Round One: One Flag GTF on Utapau

Randy: YAY! I get to be Han Solo.

Chris: The Great Slate gets to be Yoda!

Justin: Actually, it doesn't work quite like that. You have to play as a regular character, then the player who is doing the best, or sometimes the worst, gets the option to play

as a hero for a limited time. That way, they don't break the game.

Chris: No matter. The Great Slate has already achieved that score. Hey, what gives? It says I can be Grievous. Where is Yoda?

Justin: Each side only gets one hero character per map. For example, Han Solo and maybe Boba Fett would show up in Mos Eisley during the Galactic Civil War, but we're playing a different map, so Grievous and Obi-wan are the hero characters. Chris and Randy get Grievous, and Eric and I get Obi-Wan

Eric: I like this map. Isn't this where Obi-Wan rode that giant iguana around? Is it here?

Justin: I like it, too. In Conquest matches, there are a couple tanks along that narrow street to the west. It gets to be quite a meat grinder, but those tanks can really turn the tide.

Randy: Who's the guy in red?

Justin: That's one of the new units. Clone Commander. Carries a chain gun, but has no grenades. Not bad, but I prefer the Jet Trooper.

Chris: A-ha! Now, I can finally be Grievous! Give my four-armed, four-sabered, mechanical fury! Man, this is cool. Oh, check it out — he has a dash attack where he runs forward, spin-

ning all of his sabers at once.

Justin: Ack! He got me. Help!

Chris: What the hey! Noble Grievous was just thrown across the screen sideways. Is that his jumping animation?

Eric: Nope. It was Obi-Wan's force push. While you were carving up poor Justin, I killed enough of your troops to respawn as our team's jedi hero. Now, let's get it on, tin man! Ha! I won! Grievous is vanquished.

Justin: Until someone else spawns as him.

Eric: Well, yes. But still — seeing two powerful dudes going at it with light sabers on the battlefield is pretty awesome. And now that I've found the flag...

Randy: Whoa! You just zoomed right by me. Is that force running or something?

Eric: Yep. Hold down L3, and it's off to the races. It's incredibly useful during capture the flag matches. Jedi have crazy mad hops, too. You should see Vader double-jump. It's priceless.

Winner: Eric and Justin

Round Two: Conquest in Hoth Space

Chris: Ack. The Great Slate is having a great

deal of trouble not getting shot here.

Randy: Me, too. Hey, does it seem like this battle has gone on a long time?

Eric: Yeah, the space missions feel a little rough at first, because it's easy to get disoriented and they seem a little unbalanced. It helps to use the pilot class - he heals the ship as he flies. Use R3 to boost out of trouble, and also remember the target lock button, . It helps you keep your bearings.

Justin: The nice thing about the space missions is coordination. Like, did you notice how Eric and I concentrated our fire on your ship's communications array, then flew into your Star Destroyer at the same time, landed, mowed down your guards and grenaded the crap out of the ship's shield cooling system, and then stole a TIE Bomber and Interceptor to fly out of there?

Randy: I did notice that, actually.

Justin: Well, *that's* what's cool about space missions.

Winner: Eric and Justin

Round Three: Hunt on Naboo

Randy: I want to play on the Death Star.

Justin: No, you probably don't. That level looks great, but it's really complex. You need to know it well to keep from getting lost.

Randy: Wait, where's Felucia?

Eric: It's the planet with the glowy mushrooms where that blue-skinned jedi Twi'lek got axed. It's got these cool giant mantis things. Oh, but we're not playing there.

Justin: She's pretty cool in Assault matches, by the way. They're small battles in which everyone plays as a hero charac-

ter. There are only a few Assault maps, and the matches can get long, but it's fun.

Chris: Enough talk! The Great Slate demands the chance to finally play as Yoda, on his homeworld of Dagobah.

Eric: Mmm, sorry - the match winner picks the level, and Justin and I have agreed on Naboo, and a very special match type. We're the CIS forces, and you're ...

Chris: Augh! The Great Slate is a Gungan? Armed with only a few Thermal Detonators and a Fusion Torch? What sort of trickery is this?

Justin: It's a special match type where one side hunts the indigenous life. On Hoth, that would be wampas, but here on Naboo, it's gungans. Run, you floppy-eared travesties! Blast! Wheel!

Randy: Chris? Next time, do not let the two people who've been playing the game day and night for the review team up against us. Yikes!

Chris: Ow. Ow. Point taken. Ow. Ow. Ow...

Winner: Eric and Justin



Space battles can be overwhelming to new players, but "stay on target" and you'll soon get the hang of it.

This month's winners: ERIC & JUSTIN

DECEMBER PSM CHALLENGE

RULES You can only send an entry for one challenge. If you cheat or use codes, you'll be disqualified and bring shame upon your house. The final contest entry will be accepted on January 1st. If there are multiple qualifying entries, the winner will be decided by the best paragraph that explains why you should be the winner. Send a photo or a videotape (non-returnable) proving you've met the challenge, and your short paragraph explaining why you're the winner. Sorry, no e-mail entries! This contest is open only to residents of the United States, age 18 years or older. PSM reserves the right to substitute prizes of equal or greater monetary value, if necessary.

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO:

PSM December Challenge # (the challenge you're entering)
c/o Future Network USA,
150 North Hill Drive, Ste. 40
Brisbane, CA 94005

Challenge #1: Shadow of the Colossus

Beat the game and show us the cinema where the final boss goes down.

Challenge #2: Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks

Beat the game with both of the unlockable characters, showing us the ending cut scene of the last battle both times.

Challenge #3: SSX on Tour

Get yourself to the top of the rankings board and send us proof of your snow-carving skills.

AUGUST WINNERS Psychonauts

Max Anigen, Fort Smith, AR

Destroy All Humans!

Thanh Nguyen, Everett, WA

FlatOut

Kath Kalm, Livonia, MI

July's winners will receive:

187: Ride or Die game
NASCAR 06: Total Team
Control game
Rainbow Six: Lockdown game



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9/10, "Best of the Best" Award



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SUPER-PLAY

**WARNING!
READ AT YOUR
OWN RISK!**

I JUST TOLD
RANDY ALL OF THE
INGREDIENTS THAT
ARE ACTUALLY IN A
HOT DOG.

HE'LL NEVER
EAT ANOTHER
ONE AS LONG AS
HE LIVES.

HA! THE
SPOILER
STRIKES
AGAIN!

THE SPOILER PAGE



Hello PSM readers, and welcome to The Spoiler page! I am your host, The Spoiler, a man who does not know the meaning of the word "mho"... nor the definitions of the words "secret" or "taboo." Here, game

stories will be revealed with nothing withheld: who lives, who dies, how it ends... anything at all. So **BE WARNED!** If you read this page, you may learn something you *didn't* want to know...

A dying Silhouette reveals that Majestic has 11 more readers than handy matters to Crypto through, as the President, assuming the role, report to "testing facilities" ASAP. Brainwashes for all!

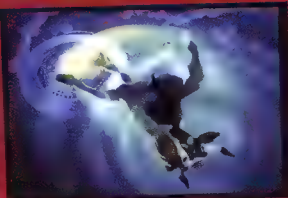
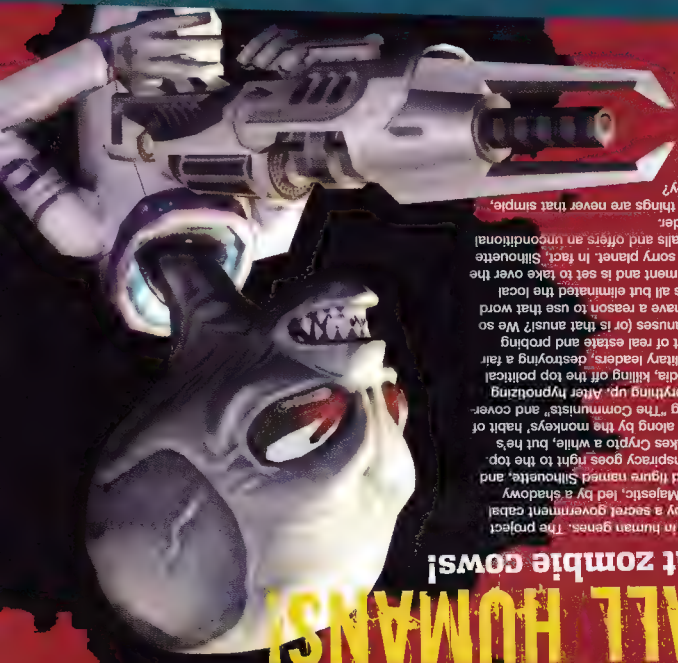
and she's an easy target. re-charge her shield a couple of wide a bit of sport. She punishes deontator, though the incoming mechs and Majestic goons pro- Robotree, thanks to circle strafe. battle is way easier than fighting Now for Silhouette herself. This

Robotree is actually pretty easy to beat - the surrounding anti-aircraft hard- ware that makes the right heavy impossible. But, with the Death Ray targeting the anti-aircraft guns, Deconstructor trained on the robot, and his Sonic Boom and Quantum Crypto eventually wins the battle.

After landing ing the White House Crypto discovers a couple of things. First, Silhouette is a clock (which, actually, you can find out way early on in the game by pro- ing the mind of Majestic goons). Plan B: the 50-foot Robotree.



THE END



are they? But things are never that simple, surrender. even calls and offers an unconditional whole, sorry planet. is set to take over the government and is set to take over the local he's all but eliminated the local rarely have a reason to use that word many anus? (or is that anus?) We so amount of real estate and probing and military leaders, destroying a fair the media, killing off the top political ing everything up. After hypnotizing blaming "The Communists" and cover- helped along by the monkeys' habit of it takes Crypto a while, but he's the conspiracy goes right to the top, masked figure named Silhouette, and called Majestic, led by a shadowy is run by a secret government cabal lingers in human genes. The project

**DESTROY ALL HUMANS!
Radioactive mutant zombie cows!**

STUPID APPEMNI

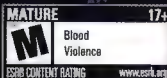
*Betrayal**Jealousy*

And so it is

**hell hath
no fury
like a woman
scorned.**

Justice

WITH
THE DEVIL BY
YOUR SIDE. PLAY AS
PRINCESS ALLURA
AS YOU LURE YOUR ENEMIES
INTO YOUR SOPHISTICATED WEB
OF TRAPS AND DARK ILLUSIONS.
ALL IN THE NAME OF PROTECTING JUSTICE AND
SAVING YOUR KINGDOM. YOU WILL PLANT A SERIES OF
DEADLY TRAPS THAT WILL MAIM, BURN, BEHEAD,
AND CONSUME YOUR ENEMIES' LIVES.
LEAVING THEIR SOULS FOR THE DEVIL...



TRAP

PlayStation.2

Blog of a Professional Zombie

When the decaying, shambling superstars can't earn a decent wage... BY ADAM WAKKES

THIS IS A LOUSY TIME TO BE A ZOMBIE, FOLKS.

MOVIES?

EXCEPT FOR THE SAINTED ROMERO...



TAK TAK TAK

"... MOST DIRECTORS NOWADAYS WANT FAST, HIGH-SPEED ZOMBIES.

BUT HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO SPRINT INSTEAD OF SHAMBLE, WHEN MY POOR ANTERIOR CRUCIATE LIGAMENTS HAVE BEEN, WELL, DECOMPOSING FOR TEN YEARS?

TAK TAK TAK

AND VIDEOGAMES ARE EVEN WORSE!

TAK TAK

TAKE A LOOK AT CAPCOM, MY FORMERLY RELIABLE EMPLOYERS.

OOH, OOH, THE GAME'S GOT A BUNCH OF VILLAGERS POSSESSED BY PARASITES OR WHATEVER.



THEY JUST RELEASED A RESIDENT EVIL GAME WITHOUT ANY ZOMBIES!!!

HA!

REMOVED!



GUHH

HEY, IF YOU AIN'T ROTTING, THEN YOU AIN'T A REAL ZOMBIE, BITCH!

AND RESIDENT EVIL WITHOUT REAL ZOMBIES IS LIKE CORN-FLAKES WITHOUT THE MILK!

IT'S AN OUTRAGE!

TAK TAK TAK TAK TAK



BAM

ANYWAY, GOTTA GO.

DON'T LAUGH, BUT I'VE GOT AN AUDITION FOR AN UWE BOLL MOVIE.

OUCH, I KNOW.



I'M HATING MY UNDEAD LIFE.

NEXT
ISSUE

Next up, our big 2005 Holiday Buyer's Guide! Plus, we've got a mega-exclusive on one of the year's biggest PS2 games — but you'll have to come back in 30 days to see just what it is. For now, let's just say that we're not monkeying around when we say that this game is giant-sized. ...Did you catch that? Did you see what I did there? I... Oh, all right, it's King Kong. (Damn, I suck at secrets.) Check it out in 30!

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NO TIME FOR SECOND CHANCES

22

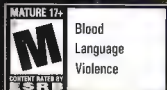
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PlayStation 2



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AND YOUR OWN LIMITATIONS?
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UNCERTAINTY? YOUR SIZE?
WILL YOU ARM YOURSELF WITH
ALMOST NOTHING, YET FIGHT AS THOUGH
YOUR ARMORY INCLUDED EVERYTHING?

WILL YOU LOOK AT A CHALLENGE
AND SEE PAST ITS SIZE?
SEE ITS WEAKNESS? EXPLOIT IT?
WILL YOU SUMMON COURAGE
GREAT ENOUGH TO CONQUER
A LIVING, BREATHING MOUNTAIN?
WILL YOU FIND YOURSELF
THE VICTOR OVER A COLOSSUS?

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